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SERMONS

TO

YOUNG MEN.

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VOLUME THE THIRD.

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He answered, Master, all these commandments have I observed from MY YOUTH. *Then Jesus beholding him,* LOVED *him.*

Mark x. 20, 21

CONTENTS

OF THE

THIRD VOLUME.

SERMON XIV.

On Duelling. - - - - 1
Anecdotes. - - - - 19

SERMON XV.

On Conversation. Part I. - 40
On Conversation. Part II. - 64
Anecdotes. - - - 84

SERMON XVI.

On Friendship. - - - 107
Anecdotes. - - - 142

CONTENTS to VOL. III.

SERMON XVII.

PART I.

On the Employment of TIME. 168

ANECDOTES. - - - 209

PART II.

On the INDUSTRIOUS Employment of TIME. - - - 217

ANECDOTES. - - - 242

SERMON XVIII.

On the Honour, Profit, and Pleasure of RELIGION. - - - 268

ANECDOTES. - - - 305

SERMON XIV.

On DUELLING.

MATT. v. 39.

But I ſay unto you, That ye reſiſt not evil.

THAT the Chriſtian religion ſhould have met with oppoſition appears nothing extraordinary, when we conſider the pride and the prejudice, the paſſions and the vices of mankind: but that any one ſhould have been hardy enough profeſſedly to attack its MORALITY, may well ſeem ſtrange, conſidering the purity and perfection, the benign tendency and ſocial excellence of that Morality. Indeed, it is upon this very bottom, that a hardy veteran * in the cauſe of infidelity hath grounded his heavy charge: the morals of Jeſus Chriſt,—palpably beyond the reach of cenſure,—are therefore "too good," "too refined;" incompatible with the weakneſs, unattainable by the powers of imperfect human nature:—An objection as falſe as it is frivolous; calculated no leſs to encourage

* Chubb.

the indolence and depravity, than to repreſs all the noble aſpirations of the ſoul after the higheſt attainments in virtue.

Amongſt the proofs of the impracticability of the Chriſtian morals urged by this clumſy combatant, is that doctrine of "Non-reſiſtance of injuries" inculcated by our Saviour in the text: a doctrine certainly, of the greateſt utility, both to individuals, and to ſociety; as eaſy for the man of true Chriſtian principles to perform, as it will ever be found delightful and ſatisfactory in the performance. Indeed, if determined to indulge their paſſions, to oppoſe no barrier to their pride or malice, their luſt or revenge, there is no wonder that men think not only this, but every other precept of Chriſtian truth ſevere, and are fond to fancy and to repreſent them as impracticable. But hence no fair judgment of the caſe can be formed: we muſt learn it, as indeed we only can learn it, from thoſe, who, ſolicitous to ſubdue their evil luſts and paſſions, have entered into the combat with reſolution and ſincerity; deſirous to *overcome*, after their

great Maſter's example, and fixed, through his grace, to perſevere unto the end. When men like theſe declare the precepts of Chriſt beyond their attainment, his laws too refined, and his morals too ſublime for practice, Their teſtimony, doubtleſs, will deſerve to be treated with reſpect and deference. But, when the enemy of the Chriſtian faith, hunting for plauſible objections to ſupport his cauſe; when the man of the world, wedded to his paſſions, and centered in himſelf; when objectors like theſe arraign the morals of Chriſt, as too exalted and pure, we wonder not at the objection; we readily grant its full weight and force, with reſpect to them.

Were it otherwiſe,—to come to a caſe in point,—could a practice ſo impious and abſurd in itſelf, and ſo directly oppoſite to the whole ſpirit and genius of the Goſpel, as that of DUELLING, have ever been known in a Chriſtian land?—No man can doubt that this barbarous brutality is forbidden by the laws of Chriſt; of Him, who hath commanded *that we reſiſt not evil:* and no man can have hardi-

neſs enough to avow that the precept is in this reſpect impracticable; for who will aſſert that DUELLING is neceſſary? So far from it, we dare to aſſert that the cuſtom, in every view of it, is unmanly, irrational, ſinful: as deſpicable, for the moſt part, in its CAUSES, as it is dreadful and deſtructive in its CONSEQUENCES.

1. Yes, my young friends, Develop the real CAUSES, diſcover the true ſources of DUELLING, and you will perceive them to be as deſpicable, as the practice itſelf is criminal. True, you will hear much from the defenders of this Gothic cuſtom, of Honour, of Reputation, of Satisfaction *, and other high-ſounding words; which, when reduced to their proper import, will be found to mean nothing leſs in the vocabulary of theſe gentlemen, than what they really imply. For that Honour, for inſtance, of which we hear ſo much, and ſee ſo little amongſt characters of this kind, is ſo far from countenancing, that it peculiarly condemns the practice. Honour, as a Principle, is the refinement of virtue †; as an

* See Anecdote 10th.

† See the Anecdotes, and Delany's ſermons, vol. ii. p. 260.

End, it is the ſplendor of reputation, the reward of ſuch virtue; and the true man of honour is he, who, from the native excellence and real dignity of juſtice, goodneſs and truth, is led to act at all times conſiſtently with them: ever reverencing his conſcience and his character, and ſolicitous to fill up the great, the worthy part, far above the narrow reſtraint and coercion of the laws, or the fallible teſtimony of mere human judgment *. And can it be ſuppoſed that a principle like this can ever allow, can ever juſtify the hazarding our own, or taking away the life of a brother, for a ſlight, nay for the greateſt affront imaginable?—Can it be ſuppoſed that a principle like this can ever give riſe to Duels, or attain its great end and reward, a ſplendid reputation, in conſequence of them? They muſt be ſtrange and perverſe eſtimators of human actions, who can either believe the one, or beſtow the other.

In the romantic ages of Chivalry, when men's brains were heated with wild and fan-

* See Cicero de Officiis.

taſtic notions of bravery and honour, it is poſſible that ſome entered the liſts, on what appeared to them the true and high principles of generoſity and virtue. But it would be no leſs eaſy to ſhew the folly and falſhood of thoſe principles, than it is palpable to obſerve, that they have no influence in modern times. Principles far different, and which can by no means claim a thouſandth part even of their worth, now place the weapons of death in the hand of the duelliſt, and call him forth in horrible oppoſition to his friend, and his brother! Furious paſſion, and unforgiving pride, here unite to give the ſudden challenge! There, wine or woman, or, in plainer words, drunkenneſs and luſt, draw the deſtructive ſword. In other caſes, the demon of Gaming * brings this fatal evil in its rear, after other miſchiefs, and finiſhes the ruin of fortune with the loſs of life. Notable cauſes all! and ſuch as muſt neceſſarily put the Soul in a fit condition to appear before the tribunal of God, if diſcharged from the Body in the hazardous, the impious conteſt!

* See vol. ii. Sermon on Gaming.

Virtue, my young friends, is conſiſtent, is uniform. Founded upon the immoveable baſis of reverence to the Deity, and dependance upon Him, it will never dare to enter deliberately upon actions, which it is conſcious that Deity muſt and will diſapprove. And therefore, we may lay it down as an infallible truth, that the man of real virtue will never draw his ſword on a fellow-creature, or dare him to the liſts of death; will never give or accept the challenge, or oppoſe his weapon to a human heart, except in ſelf-defence. And if the Cauſes of Duelling, juſt mentioned, be for the moſt part ſuch as I have ſpecified; if this deteſtable practice generally ariſes from worthleſs and criminal motives; we ſee ſtill further, that the truly good man, the man of ſtrict and real honour, as he will never give occaſion for, ſo can he never have any neceſſity to engage in deſperate, deliberate, ſingle combat!

A practice, how ſhocking to the imagination! how oppoſite to all the principles of reaſon, religion, and humanity! Two fellow-

creatures, frail, fallible, ſhort-lived mortals, endued with reaſon and reflection, and taught by religion as well as by nature to conſider each other as brethren, as friends, as united by the moſt tender and ſocial ties;—two Men, inſtigated by the meaneſt paſſions, with revenge and guilt boiling in their hearts, preparing by the piſtol or the ſword, to finiſh each other's ſhort and precarious exiſtence; and to plunge, the one with all his vices bloſſoming upon him, into awful futurity; the other, to drag the miſerable remains of life, haunted with the diſtracting conſciouſneſs of his brother's, his friend's, perhaps his once deareſt friend's * murder

* This is well expreſſed by an elegant poet.

Panthus and Euclio, link'd by friendſhip's tie,
Liv'd each for each, as each for each would die;
Like objects pleas'd them, and like objects pain'd;
'Twas but one ſoul that in two bodies reign'd.
One night, as uſual 'twas their nights to paſs,
They ply'd the chearful, but ſtill temp'rate glaſs;
When lo! a doubt is rais'd about a word;
A doubt, that muſt be ended by the ſword.
One falls a victim,—mark, O man, thy ſhame—
Becauſe their gloſſaries were not the ſame!

See Stillingfleet's Eſſay on Converſation.

upon his ſoul! Can this be Honour? and can reputation ever accompany a deed like this! Alas, were it poſſible, what reputation, what worldly pomp or praiſe could ever be availing to calm the ſorrows of a ſoul, ſtained with the guilt of ſuch blood!

But, miſtake it not, my young friends: as Honour bears no part in ſuch actions, ſo real Reputation never attends them. Look round the world and ſee, whether the Duelliſt is the man of eſtimation: Search and examine, whether he, who fears not on all occaſions to hurl defiance to mankind, and to dare them to the point of his ſword, is ranked amongſt the characters of general reſpect? No, rather you will find him an object of general deteſtation; nor would you wiſh to be connected with him in ſocial intercourſe, whoſe ſword has already reeked with the life's blood of his Friend, and who dares to avow and glory in a deed, the very relation whereof chills the heart of the truly virtuous man! Indeed, the frivolous maxims of a neighbouring nation, from whence we are too fond of

importing foibles and follies, have gone ſo far as to ſanctify this enormous evil: and, not yet ſufficiently purged by manly reaſon and genuine Chriſtianity, from the wild errors of rude and gothic barbariſm, they with their uſual levity, can even approve the Duelliſt *, and repreſent Murder as a characteriſtic of honour. But the maxims of no nation, however wiſe and reſpectable, can alter the true nature of things; no maxims can ever juſtify inhumanity in feeble mortals; paſſion, pride, and the luſt of revenge in the diſciples of Jeſus Chriſt.

2. Suppoſing this however to be poſſible; granting that the *Cauſes* of Duels might ſometimes be juſtified, and that there were caſes in which a man could no otherwiſe vindicate his honour, and defend his reputation, than (horrible expedient!) by the piſtol or

* It is no uncommon thing in France to recommend a gentleman, as peculiarly worthy your friendſhip and favourable notice, becauſe "*He has killed his Man!*" We muſt however do juſtice to the laws of France. Henry IV. tho' too favourable to the practice, diſcountenanced it by his laws: and the edict againſt Duelling was one of the greateſt glories of Lewis XIV's reign.

the ſword; yet, when reflection turns a mo-ment on the CONSEQUENCES, every appear-ance of juſtification muſt immediately vaniſh.

With reſpect to Himſelf, the Duelliſt has but two dreadful alternatives before him; ei-ther to periſh by the hand of his antagoniſt, or to incur the fearful guilt of that antago-niſt's blood! The former how irremediably fatal! the latter, how melancholy a corroſive of all the future peace and comfort of life! Oh, my young friends, when you conſider the awful greatneſs of Eternity, the ſublime and ſelf-annihilating laws of Him, who is the Lord of that Eternity; when you conſider the terms upon which you hold that exiſtence which He has given you, the tremendous ſanctions by which He hath fenced, as it were, the ſacred human life*; when you conſider that no laws, human or divine, al-low ſelf-revenge, or ever conſent to put into man's hand ſo dangerous an inſtrument as that of private retaliation of injuries; You will ſhudder at the conſequences of Duel-

* See Geneſis, Chap. ix. ver. 5, 6, &c.

ling, as they reſpect Yourſelves; and reply, in that caſe, like the celebrated Patriarch on another, "*How can I do this great wickedneſs and ſin againſt my God!* againſt my conſcience, againſt ſociety, againſt reaſon, againſt humanity, againſt every hope of preſent and future happineſs!"

But we live not for Ourſelves. Can the Duelliſt then, in the fury of his paſſions, or the bitterneſs of his revenge, overlook and totally diſregard the terrible conſequences of this deſperate deed to thoſe, with whom he is connected by the tendereſt ties? Perhaps he lives the ſole hope and ſtay of ſome antient and venerable Houſe; and, after all the labour and anxiety of youthful education is paſt, is advancing on the great theatre of the world, the delight of his friends, and the ſollicitous expectation of his affectionate parents; who in the decline of life ſee with tranſport their youth renewed, and the hopes and honour of their family reflouriſhing in their beloved ſon! And canſt thou ſuppoſe, oh young man, that no debt, on thy part, is due to theſe

parents, theſe friends? Canſt thou ſuppoſe that the diſpoſal of thy life is with thyſelf only, and that theſe have no claim upon thee? —I appeal at preſent only to thy natural affections: I call thy filial love, thy gratitude, thy tenderneſs, to the trial: Conſult with theſe, and thou wilt never dare to hazard thy ſacred life; and in one fatal moment to deprive thy parents of a ſon, thy family of a ſupport, thy friends of a benefactor!

But dearer, tenderer ties ſtill remain, to twine about the heart, to touch it with the keeneſt ſenſibility, and to preſerve it from the ſeducing calls of falſe honour and romantic bravery. If thou wilt needs engage in the deſperate Duel, See, on one ſide,—to unnerve thy wretched arm—Honour, reaſon, humanity, religion, diſavowing the deed. And from what ſource then ſhall Courage ſpring? And, on the other ſide, ſee the beloved and faithful partner of thy bed, with ſtreaming eyes, and anguiſh too great for utterance, pointing to the little pledges of your mutual affection, and with dumb but expreſſive ora-

tory, bewailing her widowed, and their orphan ſtate! Think not the melting ſoftneſs, which on that ſight, on theſe reflections, muſt ſteal upon thy ſoul; think it not any derogation to thy honour as a man: 'Tis a noble proof of right, of genuine feeling, and deſerves to be cheriſhed, to be encouraged, more if poſſible, than the black and malignant paſſions brooding in the breaſt, and inſtigating to murder and revenge, deſerve to be repreſſed, ſubdued, and execrated!

Surely no man, on the ſlighteſt review of *Conſequences* like theſe, would ſo far diſclaim his reaſon, as to ruſh upon a deed, which every law, civil and ſacred, condemns; which can admit of no juſtification, no indulgence; which muſt either involve his ſoul in the horrid guilt of murder, ſubject him to exile or impriſonment; to wander like the firſt ſhedder of a brother's blood, a wretched fugitive over the earth; or to incur the danger of an ignominious death from the impartial ſentence of the rigid law. Or, more fatal ſtill, muſt

diſmiſs him into the tremendous preſence of an Eternal Judge, under the immediate guilt of tranſgreſſing one of his ſtrongeſt, plaineſt commands, and for ever precluded from the poſſibility of repentance!

How aſtoniſhing to think, that a practice thus pregnant with miſchiefs ſhould ever have prevailed amongſt mankind! In ſome meaſure to account for it, many date its origin from thoſe dark and barbarous ages, when the true principles of government were neither known or eſtabliſhed; when legal redreſs for injuries was not eaſily to be obtained; and when too we may add, romantic ideas of courage and virtue prevailed, and the ſolid grounds of honour or religion were little underſtood. While others trace the dreadful practice up to the days of that firſt murderer above referred to; and conceive it cotemporary with the vices and corrupt paſſions of our kind. Thoſe vices and paſſions, no doubt, are the genuine ſource of this deſtructive evil: but we muſt, with equal certainty, refer to the Gothic ages, for the regular eſtabliſhment of the barbarous

cuſtom *: A cuſtom, which all the refinements of modern government, manners and religion have not been ſufficient to explode; which ſurely it would be the glory of a prince to explode; and one happy ſtep towards which, as a ſecondary means at leaſt, would be the abolition of that ſavage faſhion—another vile fruit of the Gothic tree;—"the appearing with an inſtrument of death in civil and ſocial intercourſe." Seems it not ſtrange, and moſt unpleaſing to thought, that a weapon of vengeance muſt be worn on the thigh of him, who converſes only with fellow-men, with countrymen, and with Chriſtians?—Seems it not of all abſurdities the moſt abſurd, that courts, and meetings of the moſt civilized ſort, demand the ungraceful appendage of a ſword; and proclaim that ſelf-defence is neceſſary even there?—When will the days arrive, that awakened to juſt reflection, men will diveſt themſelves of prejudices riveted by time; and abjure cuſtoms,

* See Delany's Sermons, Vol. iii. p. 252. Sully's Memoirs, Vol. ii. and Index, under the article, *Duels*.

which have nothing but barbarous antiquity to plead in their cauſe *?

To theſe prejudices and theſe cuſtoms, my young friends, it is to be feared, you muſt continue to comply with the reſt of mankind: and ſo long as they are not palpably immoral, an eaſy compliance is beſt. But for the practice which we have been decrying, when you conſider its Cauſes, and its Conſequences, when you conſider its contrariety to the Laws of your nature, your country †, and your God; You

* When matters become *ridiculous*, they often fall of themſelves to the ground: it was therefore reaſonable to have thought, that the evil complained of would have been removed, and the practice of wearing ſwords have been entirely dropped, from the time that "phyſicians were ſeen entering the chambers of the ſick, with thoſe formidable weapons by their ſide!" Can a more ridiculous abſurdity be fancied! except it be that of our modern fine gentlemen, who with monſtrous and fearful *Hangers*, now parade the ſtreets, and appear with them, in all morning aſſemblies at leaſt.

† Gentlemen of the army, who often ſo far miſtake their duty, as to think themſelves obliged to engage in Duels, are of all others the leaſt juſtifiable in the practice: ſince, not to ſpeak of the peculiar right which their country has in their lives, the articles of war are expreſs againſt the practice. For there it is enjoined, "That no officer or ſoldier ſhall

will no more dare to give or accept a challenge, than you will dare to commit the moſt flagrant and atrocious enormity. And this, not becauſe you are deficient either in courage or in honour: but on the very contrary account; becauſe you are a man of true Courage, fearing God and reverencing his laws: a man of true honour, cultivating virtue in its pureſt refinements, and ſollicitous to maintain the reverence of your own conſcience. And farther we will add, never daring the illegal, the impious Duel, becauſe your Life is not your own; becauſe the avenging of yourſelf is not entruſted with you by the

preſume to ſend a challenge to any other officer or ſoldier to fight a Duel, upon pain, if a commiſſioned officer, of being caſhiered; if a non-commiſſioned officer or ſoldier, of ſuffering corporal puniſhment, at the diſcretion of a court-martial.

"Whatſoever officer or ſoldier ſhall upbraid another for refuſing a challenge, ſhall himſelf be puniſhed as a challenger; and we hereby acquit and diſcharge all officers and ſoldiers of any diſgrace or opinion of diſadvantage, which might ariſe from their having refuſed to accept of challenges; as they will only have acted in obedience to our orders, and done their duty as good ſoldiers, who ſubject themſelves to diſcipline." Articles of War, Sect. 7. Art. 2, 5.

laws of ſociety: much more becauſe your ſoul is not your own, but His who purchaſed it with his own blood; and who, both by his ſacred precepts, and his benevolent example, hath taught, hath commanded you, *not to reſiſt evil*; but to ſubdue your own paſſions, to conquer your luſt of revenge; and at the ſame time to forgive the injurious as freely, fully, and heartily, as you hope and expect to meet with forgiveneſs from HIM *.

ANECDOTES ON DUELLING.

(1.) Perhaps there is not any word in the language leſs underſtood than HONOUR, and but few that might not have been equally miſtaken, without producing equal miſchief. Honour is both a motive and an end; as "a principle of action," it differs from virtue only in degree, and therefore neceſſarily in-

* My young readers will be highly entertained and inſtructed by a fine comment on what we have here endeavoured to enforce, if they refer to the pleaſing and judicious picture which Mr. Richardſon has drawn of his hero, Sir Charles Grandiſon, in the declining of a Duel. See Vol. ii. p. 44, &c.

cludes it, as Generoſity includes Juſtice; and as a "Reward," it can be deſerved only by thoſe actions, which no other principle can produce. To ſay of another, That he is "a man of Honour," is at once to attribute the principle, and to confer the reward: But in the common acceptation of the word, HONOUR, as a principle, does not include virtue; and therefore as a reward, is frequently beſtowed upon vice. Hence (ſuch is the blindneſs and vaſſalage of human reaſon) men are diſcouraged from virtue by the fear of ſhame, and incited to vice by the hope of Honour. Honour indeed, is always claimed in ſpecious terms; but the facts upon which the claim is founded, are often flagitiouſly wicked. Lothario arrogates the character of "a Man of Honour," for having defended a lady who had put herſelf under his protection from inſult, at the riſque of life; and Aleator, for fulfilling an engagement, to which the law would not have obliged him, at the expence of liberty. But, the champion of the lady had firſt ſeduced her to adultery, and to preſerve her from the reſentment of her huſband,

had killed him in a Duel; and the martyr to his promiſe had paid a ſum, which ſhould have diſcharged the bill of a tradeſman, to a gameſter of quality, who had given him credit at cards! Such, in the common opinion, are "Men of Honour;" and he, who in certain circumſtances ſhould abſtain from murder, perfidy, or ingratitude, would be avoided, as reflecting infamy upon his company! See the Adventurer, No. 61.

(2.) Eugenio, in conſequence of a quarrel with the illiberal and brutiſh Ventoſus, received a challenge from the latter; which he anſwered by the following billet. "Sir, your behaviour laſt night has convinced me that you are a ſcoundrel; and your letter this morning, that you are a fool. If I ſhould accept your challenge, I ſhould myſelf be both. I owe a duty to God and my country, which I deem it infamous to violate; and I am entruſted with a life, which I think cannot without folly be ſtaked againſt your's. I believe you have ruined, but you cannot degrade me. You may poſſibly, while you

ſneer over this letter, ſecretly exult in your own ſafety; but remember, that to prevent aſſaſſination, I have a ſword, and to chaſtize inſolence, a cane."—This letter was delivered to Ventoſus, who read it with all the extravagances of rage and diſdain. The perſon who conveyed it, however, endeavoured to ſooth and encourage him. He repreſented Eugenio as a poltroon, whom he ought no otherwiſe to puniſh than by removing him from the rank into which he had intruded; and this, he ſaid, would be very eaſily accompliſhed. Accordingly it was ſoon induſtriouſly reported, that Eugenio had ſtruck a perſon of high rank, and refuſed him "the ſatisfaction of a gentleman," which he had condeſcended to aſk. For not accepting a challenge, Eugenio could not be legally puniſhed, becauſe it was made his duty as a ſoldier by the articles of war*; but it drew upon him the contempt of his ſuperior officers, and made them very ſollicitous to find out ſome pretence to diſmiſs him. The friends of Ventoſus immediately intimated, that the act of violence to which Eugenio had been provoked, was com-

* See page 18.

mitted within the verge of the court, and was therefore a cauſe to break him; as for that offence he was liable to be puniſhed with the loſs of his hand, by a law, which tho' diſuſed, was ſtill in force. This expedient was eagerly adopted, and Eugenio was accordingly deprived of his commiſſion."

(3.) Forgiveneſs of injuries, and a merciful diſpoſition towards thoſe who have offended us, is not only an infallible mark of a great and noble mind; but is our indiſpenſable duty as reaſonable creatures, and peculiarly ſo as Chriſtians. The following is a fine example of this virtue. Gaſton, marquis de Renty, an illuſtrious nobleman, was a Soldier and a Chriſtian, and had the peculiar felicity to reconcile the ſeeming oppoſition between theſe characters. He had a command in the French army, and had the misfortune to receive a challenge from a perſon of diſtinction in the ſame ſervice. The marquis returned for anſwer, That he was ready to convince the gentleman that he was in the wrong; or, if he could not convince

him, was as ready to aſk his pardon. The other, not ſatisfied with this reply, inſiſted upon his meeting him with the ſword. To which the marquis ſent this anſwer: "That he was reſolved not to do it, ſince God and his king had forbidden it; otherwiſe, he would have him know, that all the endeavours he had uſed to pacify him, did not proceed from any fear of him, but of Almighty God, and his diſpleaſure: that he ſhould go every day about his uſual buſineſs, and if he did aſſault him, he would make him repent it." The angry man, not able to provoke the marquis to a duel, and meeting him one day by chance, drew his ſword, and attacked him: the marquis ſoon wounded and diſarmed both him and his ſecond, with the aſſiſtance of a ſervant who attended him. But then did this truly-chriſtian nobleman ſhew the difference betwixt a brutiſh and a chriſtian courage; for, leading them to his tent, he refreſhed them with wine and cordials, cauſed their wounds to be dreſſed, and their ſwords to be reſtored to them; then diſmiſſed them with chriſtian and friendly

advice, and was never heard to mention the affair afterwards, even to his neareſt friends. It was an uſual ſaying with this great man, "That there was more true courage and generoſity in bearing and forgiving an injury, for the love of God, than in requiting it with another; in ſuffering, rather than revenging; becauſe the thing was really more difficult." Adding, "that bulls and bears had courage enough, but it was a brutal courage; whereas that of men, ſhould be ſuch as became rational beings and Chriſtians."

(4.) We cannot, perhaps, better inſtance the nobleſt way of taking revenge, than that heretofore pointed out by a common ſoldier. When the great Condé commanded the Spaniſh army in Flanders, and laid ſiege to one of its towns, the ſoldier in queſtion being ill-treated by a general officer, and ſtruck ſeveral times with a cane, for ſome words he had let fall, anſwered very coolly, "That he ſhould ſoon make him repent it." Fifteen days after, the ſame general officer ordered the colonel of the trenches to find him out a bold and

intrepid fellow in his regiment, to do a notable piece of ſervice, and for which he promiſed a reward of an hundred piſtoles. The ſoldier we are ſpeaking of, who paſſed for the braveſt in the regiment, offered himſelf to the buſineſs; and taking with him thirty of his comrades, whom he ſelected, diſcharged his commiſſion, which was a very hazardous one, with incredible courage and ſucceſs. On his return, the officer highly commended him, and gave him the hundred piſtoles he had promiſed. Theſe, however, the ſoldier preſently diſtributed among his comrades; ſaying, he did not ſerve for pay; and demanded only, that if his late action ſeemed to deſerve any recompence, they would make him an officer; "And now, Sir," continued he, to the general (who did not know him,) "I am the ſoldier whom you ſo abuſed fifteen days ago; and I told you, I would make you repent it." The general inſtantly recollected him, and in great admiration of his virtue, threw his arms round his neck, begged his pardon, and gave him a commiſſion that very day.

4

(5.) A quarrel having arisen between a celebrated gentleman in the literary world, and one of his acquaintance; the latter heroically, and no less laconically, concluded a letter to the former, on the subject of the dispute, with "I have a life at your service, if you dare to take it." To which the other replied, "You say you have a life at my service, if I dare to take it. I must confess to you that I dare not take it: I thank my God, I have not the courage to take it. But though I own that I am afraid to deprive you of *your* life, yet, Sir, permit me to assure you, that I am equally thankful to the almighty Being, for mercifully bestowing on me sufficient resolution, if attacked, to defend *my own*." This unexpected kind of reply had the effect; it brought the madman back again to reason; friends intervened, and the affair was compromised.

(6.) The famous Sir Walter Raleigh (a man of known courage and honour) being very injuriously treated by a hot-headed rash youth, who next proceeded to challenge him, and on his refusal, spit upon him; and that

too in publick; The knight, taking out his handkerchief, with great calmneſs made him only this reply. "Young man, if I could as eaſily wipe your blood from my conſcience, as I can this injury from my face, I would this moment take away your life."—The conſequence was, that the youth, ſtruck with a ſudden and ſtrong ſenſe of his miſbehaviour, fell upon his knees, and begged forgiveneſs.

(7.) The Turks, we are aſſured, ſuffer no ſuch things as duels in their dominions. Buſbequius tells us of a reproof given to a valiant man by a baſha of Conſtantinople, for boaſting that he had challenged his enemy, which is well worthy the notice of every thinking Chriſtian. "How durſt thou," ſaid he, "challenge thy fellow-creature to a duel?—What! was there not a *Chriſtian* to fight with?—Do not both of you eat the emperor's bread?—And yet, forſooth, ye muſt go about to take away each other's lives! What precedent had you for this? Do not you know that whoever of the twain had died, the emperor had loſt a ſubject?"—Saying this, the

challenger was immediately ordered to priſon, where he lay pining many months, and was at laſt with difficulty releaſed, and even then, with the loſs of his reputation.

(8.) When any matter of difference had fallen out in Macedon betwixt two perſons, who were notoriouſly men of a turbulent and contentious temper, it was brought before king Philip, that he might determine it at his pleaſure; Who is reported to have generally paſſed this exemplary ſentence upon them: "You," (ſaid he, to the one) "I command immediately to run out of Macedon; and You," turning to the other, "ſee that you make all imaginary haſte after him:" Thus baniſhing them as peſts from the capital. A good riddance (ſays our author) of ſuch ſalamanders, as delight to live in the fire of contention; commencing ſharp quarrels upon trivial accounts, and withal knowing no time wherein to end them. See Wanley's Hiſtory of Man, B. 4. c. 42.

(9.) The Greeks and Romans, who lived before the general corruption of their coun-

trymen, never dreamt that a DUEL (which is to be decided by chance, or at moſt, by a ſkill in fencing, which they conſidered as the profeſſion of their ſlaves,) was a proper method of juſtifying one's ſelf with regard to a reproach; which frequently does not at all concern a perſon's bravery. The advantage gained proves only that one is a better Gladiator than his adverſary, but not that he is exempt from the vice with which he was charged. See Dr. Jackſon's Litera-tura Græca.

(10.) It is no uncommon thing, with perſons of the duelling ſtamp, to make a very liberal, but inexplicable uſe of the term "Satisfaction." An honeſt country gentleman had the misfortune to fall into company with two or three modern Men of Honour, where he happened to be very ill treated. One of the company, being conſcious of his offence, ſent a note to him the next morning, telling him, "he was ready to give him Satisfaction."—"Why, ſurely now," (ſays the plain honeſt man) "this is fine doing: Laſt night he ſent me away very much out of

temper, and this morning, he fancies it would be a Satisfaction, to be run thro' the body!" See the Tatler, N° 25.

(11.) This abominable cuſtom of fighting Duels ſeems, in ſome meaſure, owing to that Gothic faſhion of men's wearing ſwords, who are not of the military claſs; or, if they are ſoldiers, when they are not upon military duty. A gentleman cannot go to court, to church, to ſee his friends, nor to viſit his patient, unleſs he is armed with an inſtrument of ſlaughter. The ancient Greeks and Romans never wore ſwords but in war, neither were any Duels (as we have above hinted) ever fought amongſt them. If they challenged one another, it was either a conteſt between rival princes, and to prevent a greater effuſion of blood; or elſe, it was ſingly to fight againſt the enemies of their country. Cæſar has given us a remarkable inſtance of this kind of challenge, in his excellent Commentaries. Two centurions of high rank, T. Pulfio, and L. Varenus, having with great animoſity long conteſted which was the braver

man, or moſt worthy of preferment, and being preſent at Cæſar's camp, when aſſaulted by the Gauls; the former, in the heat of the attack, called aloud to the latter in theſe words: "Quid dubitas, Varene? Aut quem locum probanda virtutis tuæ expectas? Hic dies, hic dies de noſtris controverſiis judicabit." "Why ſhould you remain in doubt, Varenus? What fairer opportunity can you deſire for the proof of your valour?—This, this ſhall be the day to decide our controverſies." Immediately on this ſpirited call, Pulfio went out of the camp, and ruſhed upon the enemy. Varenus followed his rival; who, with his javelin, ſlew the firſt of the Gauls who engaged him; but being attacked by a ſhower of darts, one of them pierced his ſhield, and ſtuck after ſuch a manner in his belt, as prevented him from drawing his ſword. The enemy preſently ſurrounded him, thus encumbered and unable to defend himſelf. At this inſtant, Varenus came up to his aſſiſtance, ſlew one, and drove the reſt before him; but, purſuing them too eagerly, he ſtepped into a hole, and fell down. Pulfio,

who had now diſincumbered himſelf from the dart, and drawn his ſword, came very ſeaſonably to the reſcue of Varenus; with whom, after having ſlain many of the Gauls, he returned with ſafety and glory to the camp. Thus the Romans, we ſee, did not in their private quarrels ſheath their ſwords in each other's breaſt; Conteſts of valour among them were only calls and incitements to the exertion of public and patriotic deeds. See Potter's Antiq. Græc. vol ii. p. 51, 88. and Cæſar's Comment. Bell. Gallic. l. 5. c. 44.

(12.) It is reported of the famous viſcount de Turenne, that when he was a young officer, and at the ſiege of a fortified town, he had no leſs than twelve challenges ſent him; all of which he put in his pocket, without further notice: but, being ſoon after commanded upon a deſperate attack on ſome part of the fortifications, he ſent a billet to each of the challengers, acquainting them, "that he had received their papers, which he deferred anſwering till a proper occaſion offered both for them and himſelf, to exert their cou-

rage for the king's ſervice; that, being ordered to aſſault the enemy's works the next day, he deſired their company; when they would have an opportunity of ſignalizing their own bravery, and of being witneſſes of his." We may leave the reader to determine in this caſe who acted moſt like a man of ſenſe, of temper, and of true courage.

(13.) When Auguſtus Cæſar received a challenge from Mark Anthony, (in his decline of fortune) to engage him in ſingle combat, he very calmly anſwered the bearer of the meſſage; "If Anthony is weary of his life, tell him there are other ways of death, beſides the point of my ſword!" Now, who ever deemed this an inſtance of cowardice? All ages have admired it as the act of a diſcreet and gallant man; who, ſenſible of his own importance, knew how to treat the petulant and vindictive humour of a diſcontented adverſary with its deſerved contempt.

(14.) The author of the Turkiſh Spy, writing to his friend on the ſubject in que-

ſtion, obſerves, "It is not only in Italy that people kill one another in ſingle combats; 'tis the ſame in France. The beſt friends tear each other on the ſmalleſt occaſion, and prepare for a duel in ſuch a manner, as will appear to thee, without doubt, ridiculous. I cannot but call theſe Chriſtians fools, who ſuffer ſuch cuſtoms among them, and yet adore a Meſſiah, who is a God of peace; and who call us Barbarians, when yet they are the only people that teach us and all other nations, the art of ſingle combat,—the moſt pernicious cuſtom that can be introduced amongſt men: who cut one another's throats, oftentimes on ſlight occaſions, and become prodigals of that treaſure wherewith the Immortal has entruſted them."

(15.) What can be more ſhocking and painful to the good mind, than to read that account of the duel between Sir Edward Sackvile and his friend Lord Bruce, given in the Guardian, N° 129, and 133! Of two brave and eminent men, companions and friends, plunging each other into preſent, and

perchance into future woe! "The gallant behaviour (as it is called) of the combatants," to uſe the author's own words, "may ſerve to raiſe in our minds a yet higher deteſtation of that falſe Honour, which robs our country of men ſo fitted to ſupport and adorn it."— But, (as one juſtly remarks) barely to loſe life, is the ſmalleſt of thoſe evils which attend this miſchievous practice. It is pregnant with a long, an almoſt endleſs train of diſaſterous conſequences to parents, wives, children, friends, aſſociates, and the community. It is an infallible expedient to be deprived of the favour of an infinite God, and to be excluded the joys of his eternal kingdom: it is the ſure way to become an object of abhorrence to the angels of light, and be made the laughing-ſtock of devils in their dungeons of darkneſs. "Shame, everlaſting ſhame, ſhall be the reward of ſuch gallantry, the promotion of ſuch fools." How happy would it be for ſuch, could they now reflect on that future ſolemn day, wherein He who died ignominiouſly for us, ſhall deſcend from heaven to be our judge, in majeſty and glory! "How will the man,

who ſhall die by the ſword of pride and wrath, and in contention with his brother, appear before Him, at whoſe preſence all nature ſhall be in an agony; when all the powers of heaven ſhall be ſhaken; when the elements ſhall diſſolve with fervent heat; when the earth alſo, and all the works that are therein ſhall be burnt up!" Surely, it ſhould damp in every mind the diabolical madneſs, which prompts men to decide their petty animoſities by the hazard of eternity, to reflect, that in this one act, the criminal does not only highly offend, but forces himſelf uncalled into the awful preſence of his Judge. This is certainly his caſe who dies in a duel. He that ſo periſhes knowingly, outrages the Deity, and in that very action ruſhes into His offended preſence! Is it poſſible for the heart of man to conceive a more terrible image than that of a departed ſpirit in this condition?—Could we but ſuppoſe it juſt to have left its body, and ſtruck with the dire reflection,—"that to avoid the laughter of fools, and the bye-word of ideots, it has now precipitated itſelf into the din of demons, and the howlings of eternal deſpair;

how willingly now would it ſuffer the imputation of fear and cowardice, to have one moment left, not to tremble in vain!—How terrible are conviction and guilt, when they come too late for penitence!

(16.) "I ſhall recount one accident (ſays Lord Herbert) which happened while I was at the court of the French King. All things being ready for a ball, and every one being in their place, and I myſelf next to the Queen, expecting when the dancers would come in, one knocked at the door, ſomewhat louder than became, as I thought, a very civil perſon. When he came in, I remember there was a ſudden whiſper among the ladies, ſaying, "Tis Monſieur Balagny;" whereupon, alſo I ſaw the ladies and gentlewomen, one after another, invite him to ſit near them, and which is more, when one lady had his company awhile, another would ſay, "You have enjoyed him long enough, I muſt have him now." At which bold civility of theirs, tho' I were aſtoniſhed, yet it added unto my wonder, that his perſon could not be thought

at moſt but ordinary handſome. His hair, which was cut very ſhort, half-grey; his doublet but of ſackcloth, cut to his ſhirt; and his breeches only of plain grey cloth. Informing myſelf by ſome ſtanders-by who he was, I was told that he was one of the gallanteſt men in the world, as having killed eight or nine men in ſingle fight; and that for this reaſon the ladies made ſo much of him, it being the manner of all French women to cheriſh gallant men, as thinking they could not make ſo much of any one elſe, with the ſafety of their honour. This cavalier, though his head was half grey, he had not yet attained the age of 30 years." See p. 10. foregoing; Lord Herbert's Life, p. 70. and Hale's Golden Remains, p. 107, &c.

SERMON XV.

PART I.

On Conversation.

EPHESIANS iv. 29.

Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace to the hearers.

ENOUGH, my young friends, of FALSE PLEASURES: let us take the more grateful view; let us contemplate together, as we proposed *, those Pleasures, whose delights are real, permanent, and unimbittered; which give ample satisfaction in enjoyment, and afford the rich repast of reflection to the self-approving mind. When I enumerate amongst these the pleasures of "Conversation," "of Reading †," "of Friendship," "of the right and industrious Employment of Time," and as the crown of all, the plea-

* See vol. ii. Serm. 10. part 1.

† I do not propose to add any thing more on this subject, but refer to what has been already advanced in vol. i. Sermon 5. "on Early Application to Wisdom."

ſures and comforts "of ſincere Religion;" you will readily acknowledge that the characters juſt given ſtrictly belong to them; and that they are indeed the genuine ſource of man's higheſt and moſt rational delight.

That they may prove ſo, to you, my young friends, we will conſider them together; and endeavour to ſhew by what means they may impart moſt plentifully to you, from that abundance of BLESSINGS wherewith they are fraught.

The pleaſures of CONVERSATION firſt demand our attention: Converſation, the glory and the prerogative of man, the diſtinguiſhing mark of his ſuperiority over the animal world. Whether that world have an ability to communicate their ideas, to converſe with each other, has been, with many, a ſubject of much doubt and ſpeculation. That the different ſpecies of animals can convey their conceptions to each other, ſeems clear beyond a doubt; but that they are able to hold together any thing like Diſcourſe, muſt for

ever be denied, till better proofs can be given than have hitherto been brought, that they poſſeſs aught like Reaſon or Intellect. No; as this ray of the Divinity gives to the human mind its ſuperiority, its dominion over the inferior creation, ſo the power to communicate the dictates of that Reaſon, the conceptions of that heaven-born mind, dignifies, at the ſame time that it bleſſes in a peculiar degree, the human race. Hence the Pſalmiſt, with expreſſive force, ſtyles that member which is the inſtrument of ſo much honour, and ſo much good, his *Glory*, and *the beſt member that he hath* *: Since by means of the articulating Tongue, not only all the pleaſures and all the benefits of Converſation are enjoyed; but man, weak man, is enabled to addreſs and praiſe the great God of his life; nay, and to become, as it were, the thankful and adoring High-prieſt for the whole round of ſilent, but rejoicing Nature †.

Formed however for theſe high and excellent ends, and admirably capacitated, in every

* Pſ. lvii. 8. xxx. 12. † See Pſalm cxlviii.

reſpect, to anſwer them,—this GLORY of man, too frequently deviates from its purpoſe, and inſtead of the beſt, becomes the very worſt, and moſt pernicious member that he hath. St. James * fully felt, and hath finely deſcribed this horrible perverſion of ſpeech: "Behold," ſays he, "we put bits in the horſes mouths, that they may obey us; and we turn about their whole bodies. Behold alſo the ſhips, which though they be ſo great, and are driven of fierce winds, yet are they turned about with a very ſmall helm, whitherſoever the governor liſteth. Even ſo the TONGUE is a little member, and boaſteth great things. Behold how great a matter a little fire kindleth! And the tongue" [ill employed] "is a fire, a world of iniquity. So is the tongue," [if unreſtrained] among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and ſetteth on fire the courſe of nature; and it is ſet on fire of hell. For every kind of birds, of beaſts, and of ſerpents, and of things in the ſea, is tamed, and hath been tamed of mankind: but the Tongue can no man tame; it

* James, chap. iii. 3, &c.

is an unruly evil, full of deadly poiſon; therewith bleſs we God, even the Father; and therewith curſe we men, who are made after the ſimilitude of God [their common father.] Out of the ſame mouth proceedeth bleſſing and curſing. My brethren, theſe things ought not ſo to be. Doth a fountain ſend forth at the ſame place, ſweet water and bitter? Can the fig-tree, my brethren, bear olive-berries, or the vine, figs? So can no fountain yield both ſalt water and freſh. Who is a WISE MAN, and endued with knowledge amongſt you? Let him ſhew, out of a GOOD CONVERSATION, his works with meekneſs of wiſdom."

This, my young friends, is what I would eſpecially wiſh you to ſhew; and as you learn from this ſtrong paſſage of the ſacred writer, (upon which common life will read you but too plain a comment,) how eaſy it is to offend in tongue, and how ſcandalous and pernicious ſuch offences are,—depriving us at once of all the comforts of that choiceſt bleſſing, rational Converſation, and at the ſame

time ſubjecting us to the wrath of our God: — I flatter myſelf you will determine to avoid all thoſe Abuſes of the divine gift of ſpeech, which we will now proceed briefly to ſpecify; that ſo no corrupt communication may ever proceed out of your lips, but ſuch as is *good*, fitted to anſwer all the valuable ends which the gracious Creator deſigned, when he gave us this diſtinguiſhing prerogative.

By "corrupt communication," St. Paul unqueſtionably means ſuch diſcourſe as tends at once to ſhew the defilement of the ſpeaker's mind, and to defile and pollute the minds of thoſe who hear; diſcourſe, which is in every view CRIMINAL, and deſtructive of all the good purpoſes of Converſation. Of this kind are "Profaneneſs and Blaſphemy, Obſceni-"ty, Lying, and Slander." Theſe, my young friends, ſap the very foundations of liberal converſe, and dreadfully pervert, from its proper, its beneficent uſe, man's glory, the divine and chearing gift of Speech! Let no ſuch corrupt, ſuch poiſonous Communication proceed out of your mouths; ſince thus

you can neither diſplay your own wit or underſtanding, or in any degree improve others.

For ſurely, there lives not a rational creature, who can think it any mark of a ſuperior mind to "blaſpheme" that only Name, by which we are called, and to hurl bold "profaneneſs" at the throne of the Omnipotent! In truth, nothing can ſo amply teſtify a weak underſtanding; for, as there is no practice more deteſtable in itſelf, more full of guilt and impiety, ſo is there none, which hath ſo little to urge in juſtification or excuſe —no pleaſure which tempted, to plead; no profit which invited, to offer! So that thoſe who accuſtom themſelves to the horrid uſage of profane and blaſphemous diſcourſe, muſt ſtand forth of all offenders at once the moſt criminal, the moſt weak, and the moſt compleatly ſelf-condemned. And the rather, as it is not only moſt eaſy to abſtain from the diabolical language of execrations and blaſphemy; but as it is found, by repeated inſtances, that thoſe who unreſervedly uſe it on

other occaſions, can abſtain, in the company of perſons of character and virtue, whom they reſpect and reverence!

Unthinking mortals! And ſhall the preſence of a Fellow-creature, weak and frail like yourſelves, be ſufficient to awe you into decency, and to curb the daring licence of your ſinful tongues:—and ſhall the preſence of that eternal, almighty, and avenging Majeſty, who hears and notes, and will puniſh with terrible vengeance your vile and repeated blaſphemies;—ſhall His tremendous PRESENCE have no influence? ſhall it inſpire no awe? ſhall it impreſs with no fearful, no alarming apprehenſions of his juſtice and his wrath? Tho' now, with daring, inconſiderate, and abandoned inſolence, you call down, in terms ſhocking to the ear, "Damnation from that God," bold to defy, and preſumptuous to imprecate; the day, the dreadful day is haſtening on apace, when ye will ſink, poor, weak, defenceleſs creatures, into very abjects and cowards, before his blaſting frown: when the quick curſe, which you have ſo

often called down upon yourſelves, launched like blue lightning from his irreſiſtible right hand, will drive you into everlaſting perdition; and leave you eternally to execrate amidſt Devils and condemned Spirits, with empty blaſphemies, the madneſs and the folly of your conduct!

God forbid, my young friends, that ſo horrid a fate ſhould befall any of you! God forbid, that any of you ſhould fall into the guilt of ſo enormous, ſo inexcuſable a vice! It would be eaſy for me to enlarge upon it, and ſhew, in a variety of views, its atrocious and deſtructive nature: But I cannot perſuade myſelf, that you would tread theſe courts, and liſten to theſe duties, if you could allow yourſelves in ſuch an unpardonable practice. I will therefore only obſerve farther, that if you would avoid this firſt and greateſt impediment to rational Converſation, you cannot be too cautious of admitting any thing tending to an Oath, or to the Name or concerns of God, in your common diſcourſe.

It is unpleaſing to remark, in the general intercourſe of life, how very little attentive to this particular many of thoſe perſons are, who abhor, and ſtart from the imputation of common ſwearers; and who are, on ſeveral other accounts, decent and reſpectable. Yet they (and I am ſorry to obſerve, that this diſgrace is ſometimes allowed to attach even on the delicacy of the female ſex) can allow themſelves unreſervedly, and without the leaſt compunction, in the free uſe of the name of GOD, of LORD, of CHRIST: nay, and frequently can even hazard the ſacredneſs of their FAITH, their SOUL, and the like, in ſomething, which ſeems very ſimilar to an Oath, if indeed it be not a moſt ſolemn and ſerious one. This practice is not only in direct contradiction to St. Paul's advice in the text; but to our Lord's precept, *Swear not at all*, and to his advice that our communication ſhould be ſimple and ſincere *: and certainly comes under the malediction of the commandment which declares, that the *Lord will not hold them guiltleſs, who take his*

* See Matt. v. 37.

Name in vain. It is a practice highly immoral, and deſtructive of the ends of good Converſation; it incurs the guilt of blaſphemy; it tends to take off the reſtraint ariſing from a due reverence to God and his Goſpel; and is by all means to be avoided in youth eſpecially; by all means to be corrected in thoſe who have, or do at any time unfortunately allow themſelves in it.

To ſuch, and to all of you, my young friends, I would recommend the practice, and the example of the incomparable Mr. Boyle, who never uſed the name of the moſt high God, the Sovereign of all the things of the earth, but he either moved his hat, or made ſome token of obeyſance and reſpect. And whoever, like that great and good man, have on their ſouls a juſt and ſerious impreſſion of the ſuperlative and unutterable greatneſs of the God of Glory, will never dare, on any account, or even in the ſlighteſt manner, to prophane or unhallow his awful Name; but, on the contrary, will hear and repeat it with religious reverence; and will honour it no leſs by their lips, than by their lives, with every ſervice which their weak-

neſs and humility can render. "Accuſtom not then yourſelf to SWEARING, (to cloſe this head with the advice of the wiſe man;) neither uſe yourſelf to the NAMING of the holy One. For as a ſlave who is continually beaten, ſhall not be without a blue mark, ſo he that ſweareth and nameth God continually, ſhall not be faultleſs. A man that uſeth much ſwearing, ſhall be filled with iniquity, and a plague ſhall never depart from his houſe. There is a word [a blaſphemous, profane Converſation] which is cloathed about with death; God grant, that it be not found in the heritage of Jacob!—for they that uſe it, ſhall leave their memory to be curſed, and their reproach ſhall not be blotted out. But they that remain ſhall know, that there is nothing better than the fear of the Lord, and that there is nothing ſweeter than to take heed unto his commandments *."

Another ſpecies of corrupt Communication, decried by St. Paul, and to be avoided by every man who wiſhes to enjoy the benefits of refined converſation, is "Lewd and ob-

* Eccluſ. Chap. xxiii. ver. 9, &c.

ſcene Diſcourſe;" the certain teſtimony of a depraved mind, and one of the ſureſt means to deprave the minds of others. Our Saviour hath told us, that *out of the abundance of the heart the mouth ſpeaketh*; and hence our Words, as being but the dreſs of Thought, the index of the heart, aſſume either their merit or blame; whence again we are informed, that by our Words we ſhall be juſtified or condemned. What then can ſo amply declare a heart full of uncleanneſs and defilement, as a delight and reliſh in that Converſation, which kindles a bluſh upon the cheek of Modeſty, and makes the eye of Virtue look down with concern? Nor is this the only evil of ſuch Converſation; for while it betrays the inward rottenneſs of the heart, it tends at the ſame time to take off the reſtraints of purity, and debauches the chaſte and innocent mind.

Never therefore, my young friends, allow yourſelves in the uſe of it, or aſſociate with thoſe who are familiar in the filthy practice. Youthful luſts, God knows, are but too pre-

valent, and need nothing to awaken and enflame them; on the contrary, every poſſible method ſhould be exerted, in compliance with the Apoſtle's counſel, to flee from, reſiſt, and ſubdue them. And believe me, you will find more effectual to this good end, than at firſt you might ſuppoſe, a determined reſolution never to allow on your own lips, the moſt diſtant hint or ſyllable of obſcenity; never to familiarize yourſelves with thoſe, who indulge in ſo ſcandalous an abuſe of language: and whoſe corrupt tongues are continually venting the poiſonous ſteams of their luſtful hearts. If, haply, at any time thrown into company of this ſort, you have an eaſy and a ſure method to ſhew your diſapprobation, at leaſt, of ſo debaſing a perverſion of the divine Gift of Speech: "You can be grave, and ſilent." And let me tell you, my young friends, if you have judgment and fortitude enough to be ſo, you will ſoon find the happieſt effect from ſo powerful a remonſtrance. I have ſeen,—with pleaſure I have ſeen, the ſerious look of a virtuous and amiable youth, pierce the heart, and put to

ſilence the tongue of age and indecency. And oh, my young friends, if you meet with ſuch, be firm, be modeſt; and be aſſured, the incautious jeſt, the ribbald wit, the ſtudied double-meaning *, will not long offend you: For Virtue has charms too ſtrong to be reſiſted; and the more aged and advanced in life will bluſh for themſelves; and remember, how much They are to be condemned, who forget to "Reverence Youth."

But if you mean to be reverenced by others; you muſt firſt Reverence Yourſelves: And I know not of any particular more neceſſary to this end, as well as to all the purpoſes of Converſation, than Truth. Indeed, Truth is the very baſis of all Converſation, of all intercourſe between man and man; who, if they can be ſuppoſed to ſpeak falſely, and to deal deceitfully with each other, all friendly communication, all rational ſociety muſt ceaſe. On this account it is, that the univerſal conſent of mankind hath united to hold at once in the bittereſt ſcorn, and the

* See Epheſ. v. 4.

loweſt contempt, the character of the Lyar. Almoſt every other vice hath, or boaſts to have, ſomething of bravery annexed to it; but this is ſo mean and pitiful, ſo groveling and baſe, that the abject guilty of it ſhrinks into the loweſt inſignificance before us. And truly Contempt would be his propereſt reward, did not the miſchiefs and injuries to others ſo frequently ariſing from his lying tongue, render him juſtly an object of Abhorrence alſo, and a nuiſance to ſociety; and while thus ſcorned and hated by men, as perverting the divine power of ſpeech, as deſecrating the unpolluted ſanctity of Truth, the Liar is held in abomination by that God alſo *, who is Truth, and who hath deſtined to eternal perdition whoſoever *loveth and maketh a Lie* †.

Conſiderations, more than ſufficient, my young friends, to enforce upon your minds the ſtricteſt attachment to veracity; to undiſſembled ſincerity,—that ever amiable and

* See Proverbs xii. 22.

† Revel. xxii. 15.

eſtimable Virtue,—in all you ſay and do. You will find the pleaſures and the rewards of it indxpreſſibly great and delightful. You will be free from all the anxieties and entanglements in which falſhood and diſſimulation are continually involved. Truth is in its nature ſo plain and ſimple, that it requires no art, no ſubterfuge. It gives boldneſs and ingenuity to the countenance; it gives firmneſs and intrepidity to actions. Oh cultivate ſacred Truth, as a fund of ſelf-complacence, of reſpect and love from others, and of favour with your God! Labour to attain that venerably-pleaſing character, of an *Iſraelite without guile*. Sincerity is the very ground-work and foundation of almoſt every ſocial virtue. But for the pleaſures of Converſation, wherewith we are now more particularly concerned, they can have no Exiſtence without veracity. To enjoy them therefore, reſolve on all occaſions to maintain the ſtricteſt attachment to that veracity; to be ſincere and undiſſembled in all your diſcourſe: In particular never accuſtom yourſelves to ſtrong and poſitive aſſertions, which generally lead on to oaths; in

order to ſupport and confirm them, and thus too commonly add to falſhood the guilt of prophaneneſs. Nor by any means indulge yourſelves in the practice of telling marvellous and extraordinary tales: Your credulity will be ridiculed, or your veracity doubted. In ſhort, maintain, on all occaſions, plain, ſimple, natural Truth; aſſured, that the *Lip of Truth ſhall be had in honour, ſhall be eſtabliſhed for ever: but a lying Tongue is but for a moment* *.

There is another ſpecies of corrupt Communication, which may, with great propriety, come under the head of Lying; and that is "Calumny and Slander"—the bane of all Converſation; the index of a black and malevolent mind; and the foreſt plague of ſocial felicity. Yet, my young friends, deteſtable and deſtructive as it is, contradictory, in the ſtrongeſt degree, to the plaineſt and moſt important precepts of Chriſt, nay, and even unworthy the character of rational, much more of civilized, creatures; into what ſo-

* Proverbs xii. 19, &c.

ciety ſhall I lead you, to what company or Converſation ſhall I be able to recommend you, where this fatal miſchief will not intrude?

But why lament the evil? Be it our care rather to avoid it. To which purpoſe, ſtudy to engraft upon the goodneſs of your natural tempers and diſpoſitions, the noble refinements of Divine and Chriſtian Love *; that Love, which inſpires with the trueſt, with the moſt genuine good-nature, and makes the poſſeſſor the delight, the favourite of all mankind. The Heart, fraught with this Love, will fill the Tongue with gentleneſs and kindneſs; nor from it can ever flow the language of malevolence and injury, the poiſon of ſlander, or the keen ſeverity † of cenſoriouſneſs and detraction. So far from it, taught by that Love, inſpired by that right and rational good-nature ‡, juſt and generous ſentiments will fill

* See 1 Cor. xiii.

† See Proverbs xii. 18.

‡ May I be allowed to refer my young Hearers to a Poem on this ſubject, the firſt in my little Collection?

the ſoul: The weakneſs and imperfections, the follies or the vices of our fellow-creatures will be obſerved with candour and concern; conſcious of our own nature, we ſhall make proper allowances for their defects, who ſhare that nature in common with us; ſhall never blazon an abſent brother's faults, magnify his vices, or depreciate his virtues; but, well convinced of the value and importance of reputation, ſhall ſecure our own, by being tender and cautious of the reputation of others.

While ſentiment and principle, while the juſt dictates of Chriſtian Love preſerve you, my young friends, from the black guilt of determined and malicious Calumny: Let not an allowed volubility of Tongue, or a vacancy of mind, an emptineſs of underſtanding, betray you into unpremeditated, and undeſigned cenſorioufneſs. A love of talking, and a barrenneſs of ſubject, are too often the fertile ſources of this evil*. Place

* Here it may be proper juſt to add, as a caution (tho' perhaps it might be thought to belong more properly to the general hints reſpecting Converſation) that ſpeaking too

therefore a guard, a reſtraint upon your Lips, if you find yourſelf unhappily prone to garrulity: and be careful at your leiſure hours, well to ſtore your mind, that when you prepare for the pleaſures of Converſation, you may be able to produce ſomething from your

largely either in Praiſe or Diſpraiſe of any perſon, is abſurd and dangerous, and will tend to attach the perſon's character for veracity, who indulges ſo improper a cuſtom. But I can't expreſs my own ſentiments better than in the words of the ingenious Mr. Stillingfleet:

Be rarely warm in cenſure, or in praiſe,
Few men deſerve our paſſion either ways:
For half the world but floats 'twixt good and ill,
As chance diſpoſes objects, theſe the will;
'Tis but a ſee-ſaw game, where Virtue now
Mounts above Vice, and then ſinks down as low.
Beſides, the wiſe ſtill hold it for a rule
To truſt that judgment moſt that ſeems moſt cool:
For all that riſes to Hyperbole,
Proves that we err at leaſt in the degree.
But if your temper to extremes ſhould lead,
Always upon th' indulging ſide exceed:
For tho' to blame moſt lend a willing ear,
Yet hatred ever will attend on fear:
And when a neighbour's dwelling blazes out,
The world will think, 'tis time to look about.

See the Eſſay on Converſation.

treaſury, worthy yourſelf and thoſe with whom you converſe.

It is ſhameful to hear, as we often do, from "rational Creatures," the want of other matter than Scandal for Converſation urged, as a plea for the wretched trifling waſte of time at Cards. What then! can a ſet of intelligent Beings, formed for Society, for Converſation, for the noble Intercourſe of Soul with Soul; and alone, of all our Creation, favoured with this high, this exquiſite prerogative:—can ſuch Beings find in the whole round of nature and of grace, in the viſible or inviſible world, in the paſt or the preſent ages, in time or Eternity—nothing worthy to engage their thoughts, to employ their ſpeculations, to communicate their ideas, to amuſe, delight, improve, or enlarge their minds? Nothing but the little, pitiful, inſignificant defects of others—marked ſtronger, perhaps, in their own conduct; Nothing, but what they ſhould bluſh to mention, or weep to hear told!

Away, my young friends, with ſuch poor, ſuch wretched pretences! ſuch hypocritical ſelf-deluding arguments, to countenance the meaneſt and moſt deſpicable abuſe of time, and the verieſt degradation of the human intellect! The liberal and the virtuous, the ſerious and contemplative, can ever find ſufficient matter to ſupply Converſation with its choiceſt luxuries, without wounding the reputation, or ſtabbing to the heart an abſent brother's good name! As they find no propenſity to a vice thus accumulated with guilt, ſo to ſhun it, they have no cauſe to "cry for Mercy to the loweſt amuſement;" or to paſs their important hours, in inſignificance, to ſay the leaſt;—how often might we add, in the moſt deſperate and deſtructive employment *! Sollicitous at all times to improve their own minds, they enter with ſatisfaction the ſocial aſſembly; as aſſured that the minds of others will gain improvement from their acquiſitions, at the ſame time that they impart, in return, their pleaſing contribution of knowledge and wiſdom.

* See the Sermon on Gaming.

Thus, my young friends, I have traced out four capital evils in Converſation, which taint it in its very vitals, and are ever to be avoided;—"Blaſphemy," "Lewdneſs," "Lying", and "Slander." But it is not enough that you ſhun theſe. To enjoy the "Delights of Converſation," other rules are neceſſary; and we will proceed to them in our next.

END OF PART I.

SERMON XV.

PART II.

On CONVERSATION.

EPHESIANS iv. 29.

Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good, to the uſe of edifying; that it may miniſter grace to the hearers.

IN conformity with the ſacred counſel of the prophet, *Ceaſe to do evil, learn to do well*; St. Paul exhorts, with reſpect to CONVERSATION, that we Firſt ſhun that which is *corrupt*, and Secondly, practiſe that which is *good*.

Avoiding therefore the extreme evils of "Profaneneſs," "Indecency," "Lying," and "Slander," thoſe worſt branches of corrupt communication; you are to be careful, my young friends, in the next place, that your Converſation be not only innocent, but *good*, inſtructive, uſeful, and pleaſing: To which purpoſe you muſt diligently attend no leſs to the "Matter," than the "Manner," of your Converſation.

With regard to the former, there can be no doubt, that St. Paul delights to recommend eſpecially ſerious and religious diſcourſe, the moſt intereſting, the moſt inſtructive, and the moſt noble of all others; but yet not ſo to recommend it, as to exclude every other ſubject of diſcourſe, or to render it criminal to converſe on different and ordinary topics. Every wiſe and good man, would certainly wiſh to converſe moſt freely and frequently on thoſe matters which intereſt and delight him moſt, and to ſuch a man no matters can be ſo intereſting and delightful, as the great, the important truths of religion. But in proportion to their importance, ſhould be our prudence in introducing, and our caution in diſcuſſing them.

There are, my young friends, thoſe who, heated with falſe zeal, and agitated by enthuſiaſm, continually obtrude religious Converſation; and without the leaſt prudence or diſcernment, nauſeouſly preſs it upon every company. You will obſerve, in conſequence of this impropriety, the dull and ſtagnating

ſilence which commonly enſues: or, perhaps, which is worſe, the illiberal jeſt, or ſour contention which ſpring up, to the total abolition of all rational Converſe. Made wiſe by theſe admonitions, and ſtill more ſo by His counſel, who hath commanded you *not to throw pearls before ſwine*; you will be cautious how you force religious Converſation. Large and mixed companies will ſeldom bear it: the utmoſt you can do, in ſuch ſocieties, will be to preſerve the innocence of the Converſation; and now and then, perhaps, with delicacy and attention, to throw in a remark which may be ſerious and uſeful. More than this, will not only ſubject you to the charge of impertinence, but to one which is ſtill more unpleaſing, I mean, that of "Hypocriſy;" For true religion, being of a ſilent nature, men juſtly ſuſpect thoſe of a deficiency in it, or of falſe pretences to it, who are continually wearing it in their mouths, not ſhewing it by the noiſeleſs tenour of an active, uniform, and virtuous life.

Thus cautious of obtruding religious diſcourſe, you muſt endeavour to ſhew no leſs warineſs and prudence, when ſo happy as to have found a proper ſeaſon, and a proper ſet, to enjoy this higheſt feaſt of the rational mind. By no means aſſume the character of the "Diſſertator," or the "Diſputant:" the one never fails to weary and diſguſt; the other to irritate and offend: and both ſerve ſo much to feed and to diſcover thoſe tempers and diſpoſitions, which are diametrically oppoſite to the meekneſs and humility of the Chriſtian, that they totally deſtroy all the good purpoſes of religious Converſation. It is the peculiar, the diſtinguiſhing praiſe of this Converſation, that while it informs the head, it amends the heart; and therefore we cannot be too attentive, that none of thoſe paſſions intermingle themſelves in it, which are fatal to moral improvement. A ſpirit of modeſt enquiry; a willingneſs to hear and to learn; a deference to the opinions of others; and a reſpectful propoſal of your own, will tend at all times to enlarge your minds, and to gratify the minds of thoſe with

whom you converſe. Nor can we conceive, that the human intellect can enjoy a more luxurious entertainment, than Converſation, thus regulated and formed amongſt men of thinking, ſerious diſpoſitions, on ſubjects the higheſt and moſt ennobling in themſelves and to the human nature of the moſt momentous weight and concern. An entertainment, my young friends, by no means to be expected in large and mixed aſſemblies: but, for which you muſt retire, with the wiſeſt men of antient times *, to the ſhades of private life; and in the ſmall and ſelect band, known and approved, enjoy this delicious repaſt, this intercourſe of ſoul with ſoul, this moſt improving, moſt elevating, and moſt uſeful Communication.

* "Thus, ſays Mr. Hervey, Socrates, the wiſeſt of the Athenian ſages; thus Scipio, the moſt accompliſhed of the Roman generals, converſed.—Thus Cicero, the prince of orators, improved his elegant retirement at the Tuſculan villa. And Horace, the brighteſt genius in the court of Auguſtus, formed the moſt agreeable hours of his converſation upon this very plan." See Theron and Aſpaſio, vol. i. p. 5.

But not with reſpect to Religion only, it is to be feared, that if you would with to enjoy the true delights of refined Converſation, on topics of any kind, you muſt never expect it in large and general meetings: "The ſmall, ſelect, and ſocial band *", ſeems alone calculated to diffuſe and enjoy this exquiſite pleaſure †. Mixing with theſe, you muſt remember, that Converſation is a matter of mutual traffick; towards which every man is bound in duty to contribute his quota; and therefore if he means to partake of the profit, he ought by all means to furniſh his part of the ſtock.

To this end, your great endeavour ſhould be ſo to ſupply your own mind with the proper materials for Converſation, that you may

* There is an old but good remark concerning the number requiſite to form ſuch a band: "They ſhould never be more than the Muſes, it is ſaid, or fewer than the Graces."

† Dean Swift, in his uſeful Hints on Converſation, calls it "an uſeful and innocent pleaſure, fitted for every period and condition of life, and very much in all men's power." See his Works, vol. xiii.

be able, like the rich Houſeholder, to bring out of your plenteous treaſury, *things new and old*, for the entertainment and inſtruction of your friends and companions. We have before obſerved, that as it is *from the abundance of the heart the mouth ſpeaketh*, ſo men's words and Converſation neceſſarily flow from the ruling principle within: and therefore, if by reading and reflection your mind is occupied upon wiſe and ſenſible objects, and your thoughts filled with them, you will be naturally led to communicate from your ſtore; and your Diſcourſe, to the great emolument of thoſe with whom you converſe, will take the ſame uſeful and improving turn with your Thoughts.

However, one thing is carefully to be avoided; "a monopoly of the converſation." Though your topic is moſt inſtructive; tho' you underſtand it completely, and can treat of it in the moſt maſterly manner; nothing can excuſe your aſſuming to yourſelf the principal part of the diſcourſe, and not allowing to others their due ſhare and portion of it.

For Converſation, founded upon equality, by no means allows of engroſſing: every man has a right to claim his part, and expects to be heard. But this is not the only evil or offence of garrulity; it betrays a weak and an arrogant mind: and if it be accompanied, as too frequently happens, with an inſolent and dogmatical air, with an overbearing, preſumptuous, and pedantic * manner, it defeats the ends of Converſation; and infallibly brands the intemperate prater with the ſtigma of contempt.

Pythagoras, my young friends, well convinced of the great wiſdom and utility of knowing how to reſtrain the tongue, enjoined all his diſciples a three years ſilence: and be aſſured, there is more good ſenſe and advantage in knowing how to keep ſilence

* Pedantry, as I take the word, ſays Dean Swift, is not properly uſed: becauſe pedantry is the too frequent and unſeaſonable obtruding our own knowledge in common diſcourſe, and placing too great a value upon it; by which definition men of the court or army, may be as guilty of Pedantry, as a philoſopher or divine, &c. See the whole diſcourſe

properly, than you are aware of. "Silence in company, if not dulneſs or ſheepiſhneſs, is obſervation or diſcretion *." An attention to others, conciliates their regard and attention to you: and a modeſt queſtion thrown in, now and then; a kind of enquiring obſervation, never fails to conciliate to young men the eſteem of all with whom they converſe †. Always to be more knowing than you appear to be; never forwardly to obtrude yourſelf, or to wiſh to outſhine others in company; but on all occaſions to wear the garb of diffident modeſty, is the infallible road to gain in Converſation both knowledge and reſpect.

Beſides engroſſing the Converſation, we muſt note another defect, the conſequence generally of a love of talking,—that fertile ſource of innumerable evils. Never, my

* Sir W. Temple.

† The beſt rules to form a young man, ſays Sir W. Temple, are, to talk little, to hear much, to reflect alone upon what has paſſed in company, to diſtruſt their own opinions, and value others, that deſerve it.

young friends, on any account, unleſs immediately called upon, and urged by ſelf-defence, "make Yourſelves the topic of your diſcourſe." Nothing ſo naufeous, ſo offenſive as Egotiſm: it beſpeaks the empty, vain, and inſignificant mind. Men, conſcious of the ſource from whence this error ſprings, will ſuſpect whatever you ſay, and withhold from you all the praiſe you propoſe to gain by holding forth your own perfections to view: and ſhould you, with ſome, abſurdly affect to condemn yourſelf in ſober ſadneſs, for ſome vice or evil (to which you unfortunately are addicted *!) your hearers will have diſcernment enough, be ſure, to ſee of what virtue you thus mean to claim the exceſs; and will ridicule the weakneſs which You alone

* Dean Swift, than whom no man underſtood human nature better, obſerves in his Hints on Converſation, that "ſome make a vanity of telling their faults; They are the ſtrangeſt men in the world, they cannot diſſemble; they own it is a folly: they have loſt abundance of advantages by it; but if you would give them the world, they cannot help it; there is ſomething in their nature which abhors inſincerity and conſtraint;—with many other unſufferable topics of the ſame altitude."

are too blind to overlook. To pleaſe and to be inſtructed, you will act wiſely to "annihilate yourſelf," as it were, in Converſation: nothing is ſo diſguſting as a man "too big" for his company *; and nothing ſo deſpicable and tedious, as the inſipid retailer of dull ſtories and circumſtantial narratives; the miſerable, minute, ſelf-important hiſtorian of unintereſting details, which lull even ſweet Patience herſelf to ſleep, and make Good ſenſe run mad!

But let me caution you, my young friends, as againſt the Exceſs of talking † on one hand,

* Nothing ſo unreaſonable or inſufferable, in common Converſation, as ſufficiency, ſays Sir William Temple. See his Heads of an Eſſay on Converſ. Works, vol. iii. p. 525, 8vo. and the Anecdotes.

† A diſtinction here ſhould take place, which is well put by Dean Swift: It is not, ſays he, a fault in company to talk much; but to continue it long, is certainly a great one; for if the majority of thoſe who are got together be naturally ſilent or cautious, the Converſation will flag, unleſs it be often renewed by one among them, who can ſtart new ſubjects; Provided he doth not DWELL upon them, but leaveth room for anſwers and replies.

ſo againſt the defect on the other. A modeſt and reſpectful ſilence is doubtleſs moſt wiſe and amiable; but a dull and moroſe one is hateful and diſguſting. And I know not, whether the eternal ſhallow prater may not be the better companion of the two, than the man who in ſolemn ſilence hears, and ſpeaks not; Or only, perhaps, in blunt honeſty, as he calls it, now and then ſpeaks his mind, to the pain and diſguſt of all preſent; Or, with an importance, which nothing but his dulneſs can exceed, occaſionally diſtills a ſentence or two, drop by drop, from his oracular lips.

That great apoſtle, whoſe words we have taken as the foundation of this diſcourſe, tells us, that it was a rule of his conduct "*to become all things to all men*, ſo far as reaſon and religion allowed him to comply, *that he might gain ſome*; with the Jews a Jew, with the Gentiles a Gentile." 'Tis a rule, my young friends, no leſs uſeful for the attaining all the pleaſures and advantages of Conver-

ſation*. *Become all things to all men*, under the ſame invariable diſtinctions: endeavour, as much as you can, and ought, to conform yourſelves to the taſte, character, and preſent humour of thoſe with whom you converſe. To do this, certainly, requires diſcernment and judgment; but a due attention, and conſtant obſervation of men and manners, will be found ſufficient to teach it, at leaſt in a great degree. Eſpecially, if while you take the rule from St. Paul, you take alſo from Him the grand principle whereupon he framed it; namely, a ſincere love to your fellow creatures, grounded on the principle of Chriſtian truth. This love will inſpire you with ſo amiable a deſire to pleaſe all thoſe with whom you converſe, to their Edification, that it will teach you the trueſt Politeneſs†; that emi-

* Aulus Gellius judiciouſly exhorts to take care to unite the benefits of Improvement, with the blandiſhments of Pleaſure in Converſation.

† The elegant author of the Eſſay on Converſation, adviſes—

"Study with Care, Politeneſs: That muſt teach
The modiſh forms of geſture and of ſpeech.

nent qualification, without which Converſation muſt be offenſive; with which it can never fail to be agreeable.

Politeneſs in the common intercourſe of the world, is a ſubſidium to what Chriſtian Love is, in the better ſyſtem of religion and virtue. The former may be defined "A conſtant attention to oblige, to do or ſay nothing, which may give pain or offence:" And Chriſtian love is a continual endeavour to pleaſe, in order to promote our neighbour's beſt welfare. While therefore, my young friends, you act upon the amiable principles of Chriſtian truth, let that love eſpecially, which is the moſt refined politeneſs, be the principal regulator of your behaviour in Converſation. "Study always to pleaſe, in order to improve, and do good." Good ſenſe, good-humour, and good-breeding, unite in nearly

She moves with eaſy, though with meaſur'd pace,
And ſhews no part of ſtudy, but the grace;
Yet even by This man is but half refin'd,
Unleſs Philoſophy ſubdues the mind:
'Tis but a varniſh, that is quickly loſt,
Whene'er the ſoul in Paſſion's ſea is toſt."

the ſame dictate * : and if they carry not the motive ſo far as it is carried by Chriſtianity, rejoice, that you have the happy, the plain direction of a Precept to form your behaviour, which is no leſs infallibly productive of your own internal peace and felicity, than it is certain to recommend you to the approbation and good eſteem of others.

Thus too, permit me to obſerve, you will be enabled to promote, in a peculiar manner, the honour of that holy religion, upon which the moroſe and forbidding carriage of ſome auſtere and miſtaken zealots hath brought a ſuſpicion of moroſeneſs and unſociability.

* The chief ingredients in the compoſition of thoſe good qualities, which gain eſteem and praiſe, ſays Sir W. Temple, are truth, good nature, good ſenſe, and good breeding.—Good nature is ſeen in a diſpoſition to ſay or do what one thinks will pleaſe or profit others. Good breeding, in doing nothing one thinks will either hurt or diſpleaſe them. Good nature and good ſenſe come from our births or tempers; good breeding and truth chiefly by education and converſe with men. Yet truth ſeems much in one's blood; and is gained too by good ſenſe, and reflection, That nothing is a greater poſſeſſion, or of more advantage to thoſe who have it, as well as thoſe who deal with it.

How differently will they judge of it, who ſee you, actuated by its divine principles, *ſhewing out of a good Converſation your works, with all the meekneſs of wiſdom*; ſhewing that genuine and unaffected Humility, which Chriſtian love inſpires, and which is one of the moſt requiſite and adorning qualifications in Converſation: when they ſee you actuated by the firſt and characteriſtic precept of it, Love to mankind; cautious of all offence in word, abhorring profaneneſs, indecency, falſhood, and ſlander; and daring no more to offend God, than to injure, in the ſlighteſt degree, the reputation of a fellow-creature: when they ſee you, with the utmoſt modeſty, ſweetneſs, and gentleneſs of manners, hearing with attention *, replying with diffidence, and inſtructing, while never ſeeming to inſtruct: while they ſee the bluſh kindle on your cheeks, on any occaſion of producing yourſelf, and mentioning your own concerns; ſtudious to pleaſe others; careful never to pain or of-

* To make others wit appear more than one's own, a good rule in Converſation: a neceſſary one to let others take notice of your wit, and never do it yourſelf. Sir W. Temple.

ſend them; and conſequently, never meddling with thoſe dangerous weapons Raillery and Humour, which too commonly cut with both edges, and wound as well the hand that ſtrikes, as the perſon ſtricken with them *: In ſhort, while they ſee you ſollicitous to become all things to all men, that you may engage and win them; and anxious to introduce the moſt profitable "Matter," by the moſt pleaſing "Manner," in Converſation, that you may if poſſible *miniſter Grace*; and lead, by the paths of imitation thoſe who hear, to the ſame fountain whence you draw ſuch a fund of ſatisfaction and advantage.

Many more, my young friends, are the rules, which are or may be laid down for Converſa-

* Hence the author of the Eſſay on Converſation adviſes,

"—Above all things, raillery decline,
Nature but few does for that talk deſign:
'Tis in the ableſt hand a dangerous tool,
Which never fails to wound the meddling fool:
For all muſt grant, it needs no common art,
To keep men patient, when we make them ſmart."

Theſe ſpecimens from this uſeful poem, will be ſufficient to recommend an attentive peruſal of the whole. See Dodſley's Miſcell. vol. i. p. 310.

tion; one of the livelieſt of our pleaſures, the enlarger of our knowledge, and a principal ſource of our intellectual wealth. But what I have ſaid may ſuffice, at once to point out the chief evils which you ſhould avoid, and the more important qualifications which you ſhould cultivate, in order to enjoy this pleaſure in its trueſt perfection. Happy they, who, aſſociated with thoſe of ſimilar diſpoſitions and purſuits with themſelves, cheriſh and enjoy this higheſt entertainment. Mixed with friends choſen and approved, you may diſcuſs with infinite utility ſubjects of the moſt important nature; and ſuch diſcuſſion, be aſſured, will peculiarly enlarge your minds. Great and extenſive is the round of intellectual knowledge; various and infinite the topics worthy to engage a rational attention and enquiry: and one peculiar excellence, my young friends, of ſuch attention and enquiry, is, that while it mends and improves the mind, it preſerves it at the ſame time from the pitiful aberrations, into which they fall, who are vacant and unemployed; or

engaged alone in the frippery purſuits of vanity, folly, and the world.

Cultivate, therefore, my young friends, rational Converſation; and let me particularly recommend, as a ſubject ever and moſt eſpecially worthy that Converſation, the Deity and his works; his ample works in Creation and Redemption. Religious Converſation, under the reſtrictions laid down in the former part of this Diſcourſe, is as we have ſaid, and truly ſaid, "the moſt noble, the moſt intereſting, and moſt inſtructive of all others." "A frequent conference on the Glories of the GODHEAD [I uſe the words of one, who well knew the ſublimity and excellence of that Converſation *] or the wonders of Creation, will invigorate and ennoble the ſoul: will enlarge her faculties, and elevate her deſires. *Did not our hearts burn within us*, ſaid the travellers at Emmaus, *while* HE *talked with us by the way?* Theſe diſcourſes, 'tis true, were conducted with a ſpirit, and enforced with an energy, abſolutely unequalled.

* Mr. Hervey. See Theron and Aſpaſio.

Yet the ſame happy effects would, in an inferior degree, reſult from our friendly conferences, if they turned upon the ſame important points. We alſo ſhould feel our hearts warmed with holy zeal, and glowing with heavenly love. Nor would ſuch conferences be productive of preſent advantage only; they would yield a renewed pleaſure in the retroſpect. We might reflect with real complacency, on hours ſpent in ſo rational a manner."

And as a farther motive to ſuch Converſation, we ſhall do well to conſider, that the infinite and eternal GOD is preſent at all our interviews; vouchſafes to expreſs his ſatisfaction, and to acknowledge himſelf magnified, when with admiration and love we talk of his tranſcendent excellencies. Nay, we are aſſured, that the Lord of all Lords not only hearkens, but keeps a book of remembrance, and will diſtinguiſh ſuch perſons at the day of univerſal retribution. When the looſe train of licentious talkers are driven away as the deſpicable chaff; Theſe

ſhall be ſelected for his peculiar treaſure, and numbered among the Jewels of Jehovah *.

Who then, that is wiſe, would not habituate himſelf to a practice, which comes ſo ſtrongly recommended by the voice of reaſon, and is enforced by the authority of God? A practice, which will "adminiſter preſent good" —will "afford pleaſing reviews"—and "terminate in everlaſting honour?"

ANECDOTES reſpecting CONVERSATION.

(1.) Plutarch tells us, in a few words, what an infinite advantage Alexander reaped from the fine taſte wherewith his preceptor Ariſtotle inſpired him, even from his tendereſt infancy. "He loved, ſays our author, to converſe with learned men; to improve himſelf in knowledge; and to ſtudy." Three ſources theſe, of a monarch's happineſs, which enable him to ſecure himſelf from numberleſs difficulties; three certain and infallible me-

* See Malachi, iii. 16, 17.

thods of learning to reign without the aſſiſtance of others. The "Converſation" of perſons of fine ſenſe inſtructs a prince, as it were, in the way of amuſement; and teaches him a thouſand curious and uſeful things, without coſting him the leaſt trouble. The "Leſſons" inculcated by able maſters, impreſs and wonderfully improve; and furniſh him with rules to govern his ſubjects with wiſdom; and in fine, "Study", eſpecially that of Hiſtory, crowns the whole; becomes to him a preceptor of all ſeaſons, and for all hours; who, without growing troubleſome, acquaints him with truths which no one elſe dare to give him; under fictitious names, exhibits him to himſelf, and teaches him to know, to feel and ſupport his own character, as well as to inveſtigate thoſe of mankind, who are the ſame in all ages.

(2.) It was Mr. Locke's peculiar art in Converſation, to lead people to talk of their own profeſſion, or whatever they beſt underſtood. With a gardener, he diſcourſed of gardening; with a jeweller, of diamonds;

with a chymiſt, of chymiſtry; with a watch-maker, of clocks, watches, &c. "By this means, ſaid he, I pleaſe all thoſe men, who commonly can ſpeak pertinently upon nothing elſe. As they believe I have an eſteem for their profeſſion, they are charmed with ſhewing their abilities before me; and I in the mean time improve myſelf by their diſcourſe." By thus putting queſtions to artificers, he would ſometimes find out a ſecret in their art which they did not underſtand themſelves; and often give them views of the ſubject entirely new, which they put into practice with advantage.

(3.) The faculty of interchanging our thoughts with one another, or what we expreſs by CONVERSATION, has always been repreſented by moral writers, as one of the nobleſt privileges of reaſon, and which more particularly ſets mankind above the brute part of creation. Monſieur Varillas once told his friend, the author of the Menagiana, that out of every ten things he knew, he had learned nine

in Converſation. And I too, ſays M. Menage, can in a great meaſure declare the ſame. See Menag. vol. i.

(4.) The underſtanding of a man deprived of the converſe of others, is ſo little exerciſed, and ſo little cultivated, that he does not think ſo much thereon, as he is indiſpenſably obliged to do by external objects. The greateſt fund of the Ideas of men therefore, is in their reciprocal Converſation; and we may add, one of the moſt fertile ſources of their Comforts too. It was no ill reflection that Tully made upon the delight and pleaſure men naturally have in communication,—in telling other men what they know, and what they have ſeen; "That if a man could get up into Heaven, and take a clear view of the Majeſty thereof, and behold the beauty of the ſtars, and the other ornaments of the ſky; Inſuavem illam admiratio ei fore; quæ jucundiſſima fuiſſet, ſi aliquem cui narraret habuiſſet; That wonderful proſpect would be even inſipid, for want of ſomebody to

whom he might relate what he ſaw." Men do not ſee ſo much, becauſe they do not mark ſo well, alone, as in Converſation; and he who informs others, often teaches himſelf; it being a bleſſing upon mental Intercourſe, that new and uſeful thoughts occur in the act of communication.

(5.) Pliny, in one of his elegant epiſtles, ſpeaking of his friend Iſeus, ſays, "Authors you may turn over at any time; but you cannot always have an opportunity of hearing Iſeus. We are infinitely more affected with what we hear, than with what we read. There is ſomething in the voice, the countenance, the habit, and the geſture of the ſpeaker, that concurs in fixing an impreſſion upon the mind, and gives this method of inſtruction greatly the advantage of any thing one can receive from books." See B. 2. Lett. 3. Melmoth.

(6.) The utility and excellence of rational converſation cannot perhaps be expreſſed in

words more beautiful and elegant than the following, by Dr. Young.

Good ſenſe will ſtagnate. Thoughts ſhut up want air,
And ſpoil, like bales unopen'd to the ſun.
Had Thought been all, ſweet Speech had been deny'd;
Speech, Thought's canal! Speech, Thought's criterion too!
Thought in the mine, may come forth gold, or droſs;
When coin'd in words, we know its real worth.
If ſterling, ſtore it for thy future uſe;
'Twill buy thee benefit, perhaps renown.
Thought too, deliver'd, is the more poſſeſs'd;
Teaching we learn; and giving we retain
The births of intellect; when dumb, forgot.
Speech ventilates our intellectual fire;
Speech burniſhes our mental magazine;
Brightens for ornament, and whets for uſe.
What numbers, ſheath'd in erudition, lie,
Plung'd to the hilts in venerable tomes,
And ruſted in; who might have borne an edge,
And play'd a ſprightly beam, if born to Speech;

If born bleſt heirs of half their mother's tongue!
'Tis thoughts exchange, which, like th'alternate puſh
Of waves conflicting, breaks the learned ſcum,
And defecates the ſtudent's ſtanding pool.
Rude Thought runs wild in Contemplation's field;
Converſe, the menage, breaks it to the bit
Of due reſtraint; and Emulation's ſpur
Gives graceful energy, by rivals aw'd.
'Tis Converſe qualifies for ſolitude,
As exerciſe, for ſalutary reſt.

Night 2.

(7.) Solomon tells us, that "he who walketh with wiſe men will be wiſe." 'Tis not ſo only in matters of Religion; it extends to every circumſtance of life. Converſation with men of polite genius, is a certain method for improving our natural taſte; for adorning and enriching the mind. "It is impoſſible (ſays Mr. Addiſon) for a man of the greateſt parts to conſider any thing in its whole extent, and in all its variety of lights. Every man, beſides thoſe general obſervations which are to

be made upon an author, forms ſeveral reflections, that are peculiar to his own manner of thinking: ſo that Converſation will naturally furniſh us with hints which we did not attend to, and make us enjoy other men's parts and reflections, as well as our own. This is the beſt reaſon I can give for the obſervation which ſeveral have made, that men of great genius in the ſame way of writing, ſeldom riſe up ſingly, but at certain periods of time appear together, and in a body; as they did at Rome, in the reign of Auguſtus, and in Greece about the age of Socrates. I cannot think that Corneille, Racine, Moliere, Boileau, La Fontaine, Bruyere, Boſſu, or the Daciers, would have written ſo well as they have done, had they not been friends and contemporaries." Spectator, N°. 409.

(8.) Of all the inconveniencies attending the intercourſe of mankind, Slander and Detraction are the moſt frequent, and in a very high degree odious and deteſtable. We are told of St. Bernard, that when he was drawing near his end, he thus ſolemnly addreſſed

himſelf to his brethren, as a dying man bequeathing legacies to his friends. "Three things I require you to keep and obſerve; which I remember to have kept, to the beſt of my power, as long as I have lived. 1. I have not willed to ſlander any perſon; and if any have fallen, I have hid it as much as poſſible. 2. I have ever truſted leſs to my own wit and underſtanding than to any other's. 3. If I were at any time hurt, harmed, and annoyed, I never wiſhed vengeance againſt the party who ſo wronged me." This memorable ſentence is peculiarly applicable to every branch of the preſent ſubject; Defamation, inſolent Overbearing, and petulant Animoſity, being the chief ingredients that tend to embitter Converſation, and preclude its improvement and advantage.

(9.) It is always a certain ſign of an ill heart, to be inclined to defamation. They who are harmleſs and innocent, can have no gratification that way; but it ever ariſes from a neglect of what is laudable in a man's ſelf, and an impatience of ſeeing it in another.

How wretchedly low and contemptible is that ſtate of mind, which cannot be pleaſed, but by what is the ſubject of juſt lamentation? This temper has ever been in the higheſt degree odious to gallant ſpirits, and ought to be ſcouted from every ſociety of men. The Perſian ſoldier, who was over-heard reviling Alexander the Great, was well admoniſhed by his officer, in thoſe memorable words. "Sir, you are paid to fight againſt Alexander, and not to rail at him *."

(10.) Cicero, in one of his pleadings, defending his client from general ſcandal, ſays very handſomely, and with much reaſon, "There are many who have particular engagements to the proſecutor: there are many who are known to have ill will to him for whom I appear; there are many who are naturally addicted to defamation, and envious of any good to any man, who may have contributed to ſpread reports of this kind. For nothing is ſo ſwift as ſcandal; nothing is more

* See a well written Letter on this ſubject in the Chriſtian's Magazine, vol. iv. p. 411—413.

eaſily ſent abroad; nothing received with more welcome; nothing diffuſes itſelf ſo univerſally. I ſhall not deſire, that if any report to our diſadvantage has any ground for it, you would overlook or extenuate it. But, if there be any thing advanced, without a perſon who can ſay whence he had it; or, which is atteſted by one who forgot who told it him, or, who had it from one of ſo little conſideration, that he did not then think it worth his notice; all ſuch teſtimonies as theſe, I know you will think too ſlight, to have any credit againſt the innocence and honour of our fellow citizens." What an admirable rule and criterion of Converſation is this! When an ill report is traced, it very often vaniſhes among ſuch as the orator has here recited: and how deſpicable a creature muſt that be, who is in pain for what paſſes among ſo frivolous a people! Spectator, No. 427.

(11.) Few have more happily expreſſed themſelves on the topick in queſtion than

Epictetus. "Consider with yourself seriously, says he, what figure is most fit for you to make in the world; and then fix upon a method and rule in order hereunto; which be sure to observe nicely, both at home alone, and abroad in company.—At all publick entertainments, and in mixed companies, keep a strict guard upon yourself, lest you be infected with rude and vulgar Conversation; For know, that tho' a man be never so clear himself, yet by frequenting company that are tainted, he will of necessity contract some pollution from them. Above all things take care not to talk of other people; neither so as to censure their conduct, nor to be lavish in their commendation, nor to make invidious comparisons between one and another. In familiar conversation with your friends and acquaintance, do not make it your business to entertain the company with tedious narratives of yourself, and your own affairs. Consider that their sensations and yours are very different upon these occasions; and though the exploits by which you have signalized yourself, the successes you have obtained, the

dangers you have encountered, or the afflictions you have undergone, may be a very agreeable ſtory to Yourſelf to tell, yet it will not be equally ſo for Others to hear.—As little will it become you to render yourſelf the common Buffoon, and be always trying to make the company laugh; for this is a very nice and tickliſh thing, exceedingly apt to degenerate into vice and folly; and, obſerve it when you will, he that only ſtudies men's Diverſion, ſhall be ſure at the ſame time to loſe their Reſpect.—Of all kind of diſcourſe, none is more unſafe, none more deſpicable than that, which breaks in upon Modeſty and good manners: whenever therefore any perſon in your preſence flies out into Obſcenity, if ſo great a liberty can decently be taken, reprove him publickly, and put a ſtop to the lewd talk. But if that cannot conveniently be done, do yourſelf the juſtice to diſapprove it; and, by forbearing to join with him, by bluſhing for him, and by chiding looks, let all the company ſee plainly, that you deteſt his filthy ribaldry."

(12.) Eusebius was a man of sense, of politeness, and of unaffected piety: it often shocked him to find in the common intercourses of life, that Christians, who are forbidden to swear by any thing, assumed a liberty of swearing by all things. One would think the breach of a divine precept was the only design they aim'd at, and disobedience to God's commands their only diversion; as if, truly, it were some notable exploit to lay down the language of their country, and take up that of the damn'd. Eusebius could not endure this execrable jargon. A thousand good qualities in a person, made no atonement in his opinion for this only bad one; and though he pitied those failures, that favour'd of weakness, he never gave quarter to blasphemy. "Other vices, said he, make bold with God's commands, this outrages his very person; it adds insult to disobedience, and contempt to abuse: it is a symptom of absolute irreligion. For who will revile the very Being he adores? or rally and worship the same object? And what respect, satis-

faction, or credit can we expect to derive from him, who turns upon his Creator, and flies in the face of the Omnipotent?"

(13.) Neander was an excellent ſoldier, he feared nothing but Fear; he always choſe the van, and was often the firſt man on the breach. All admir'd his courage, and praiſed it; and even thoſe who diſapproved his conduct, did juſtice to his valour. This gentleman however, unfortunately managed it ſo, as to loſe at the table the glory he won in the field; and by talking away in his winter quarters, diſſipated the honour he had purchaſed in the whole campaign. In ſhort, he was a moſt inſufferable Egotiſt. "I did this, ſaid he, at the ſiege of R——, and this at the battle of D———. Had not I ſeized on ſuch a poſt at * * *, the army had been in danger." One would have thought all the generals and ſoldiers had been in garriſon, and that Neander, with his ſmall brigade alone, had defeated the deſigns of the French. This over-grown vanity coſt him dear: inſtead of gaining the

reputation of a General, he went off with that of a Fop; and all concluded, that he was too ambitious of praiſe, to deſerve any. Your deep rivers move with a ſilent majeſty; ſhallow brooks alone make a noiſe and tumult among the pebbles. The great marſhal de Turenne never ſpoke of himſelf, but when forced, and even then with modeſty: and though the king was wholly indebted to the wiſe conduct of this gallant man for many victories, yet Turenne never was the man to blazon it; on the contrary he would lay his Miſcarriages at his own door, and Succeſs at that of his officers and ſoldiers. This made him appear great even in his overthrow; and generally his moderation was more glorious to him than victory. Imitate the ſilence of this hero, not the noiſy impertinence of fools. Carry off the ſatisfaction of performing great actions, and let others acquire and enjoy the honour of praiſing them. For he that exalteth himſelf ſhall be abaſed, while they only who humble themſelves, ſhall be exalted.

(14.) It was wholeſome counſel which an old gentleman gave to his young friend; "Avoid, my dear ſir, the modiſh rant of Oaths and imprecations: it is an ungenteel dialect, as well as unchriſtian, and claſhes both with the rules of breeding, and of the goſpel. Cuſtom, indeed, has made them faſhionable, but neither can make them civil or lawful; for vice can never plead preſcription. In a word, whatever jars with religion and attacks good breeding, is below a gentleman; and therefore, in ſpite of example and practice, I muſt caution you againſt ſome parts of Engliſh civility; for though they paſs by conſent in the Engliſh dominions, they will not bear the teſt of other nations. I know ſome are ready to fling a veil on thoſe bear-garden expreſſions, ſo frequent in converſation, and to waſh over their impiety with fair pretences. But, ſtill, Sir, the ſillineſs of the excuſe cannot ſtifle the monſtrous incivility of the compliment. For, though it may ſignify nothing to him who receives it as words of courſe; it will ſignify much to him who uttered it, when poſſibly he himſelf has forgot it.

Though a friend may let ſuch curſes fall to the ground, God will put them to account; and though they ſtand for cyphers in England, they may purchaſe eternal torments in hell *."

(15.) A prudent man will avoid talking much of any particular ſcience, for which he is remarkably famous. There is not a handſomer thing ſaid of Mr. Cowley, in his whole life, than that none but his intimate friends ever diſcovered he was a great Poet, by his diſcourſe. Beſides the decency of this rule, it is certainly founded in that good policy of which Mr. Locke, as abovementioned, ſo well availed himſelf. A man who talks of any thing he is already famous for, has little to get, but a great deal to loſe.

(16.) Notwithſtanding all the advantages of youth, few young people pleaſe in conver-

* For ſome cloſe reflections addreſſed to a perſon of diſtinction, and otherwiſe very amiable, but a common ſwearer; the reader is referred to the Chriſtian's Magazine, vol. ii. p. 480.

ſation. The reaſon is, that want of experience makes them poſitive; and what they ſay is rather with a deſign to pleaſe themſelves, than to edify or entertain any one elſe. If there can be any thing more ſilly than this, it is the ſtrange pleaſure ſome illiberal people take, in what they call "ſpeaking their minds." A man of this ſtamp will ſay a rude thing for the mere pleaſure of ſaying it, when an oppoſite behaviour, full as ſenſible and more innocent, might have preſerved his friend, or made his fortune.

(17.) Sir Richard Steele obſerves, that there are ſome men who on all occaſions, in all companies, talk in the ſame circle and round of chat as they have picked up in their daily peregrinations. I remember, ſays he, at a full table in the city, one of theſe ubiquitary wits was entertaining the company with a Soliloquy (for ſo I call it, when a man talks to thoſe who do not underſtand him) concerning Wit and Humour. An honeſt gentleman, who ſat next to me, and was worth half a plumb, ſtared at him, and

obſerving there was ſome ſenſe, as he thought, mixed with his impertinence, whiſpered me, "Take my word for it, this fellow is more knave than fool." This was all my good friend's applauſe of the wittieſt man of talk that I was ever preſent at, which wanted nothing to make it excellent, but that there was no occaſion for it. See Tatler, N°. 244.

(18.) The ſame ingenious author has the following remarks on loquacity. I look upon a tedious talker, or what is generally known by the name of "a ſtory-teller," to be much more inſufferable, than even a prolix writer. An Author may be toſs'd out of your hand, and thrown aſide, when he grows dull and tireſome; but ſuch liberties are ſo far from being allowed towards theſe Orators in common Converſation, that I have known a challenge ſent a perſon, for going out of the room abruptly, and leaving a man of honour in the midſt of a diſſertation. The life of man is too ſhort for a ſtory-teller. Methuſalem might be half an hour in telling

what o'clock it was: But for us Postdiluvians, we ought to do every thing in haste; and in our ſpeeches as well as actions remember, that our time is ſhort. I would eſtabliſh but one great general rule to be obſerved in all Converſation, which is this, "That men ſhould not talk to pleaſe themſelves, but thoſe that hear them." This would make them conſider, whether what they ſpeak be worth hearing; whether there be either wit or ſenſe in what they are about to ſay; and whether it be adapted to the Time when, the Place where, and the Perſon to whom it is ſpoken.

(19.) A certain celebrated nobleman, ſpeaking of another, remarkable in Converſation for his loquacity and manner of addreſs, obſerved, "That he was always too big for his company." This fault is not a whit the leſs unpardonable, for being ſo very common: it is neither good-natured, nor juſt, nor decent; but the certain mark of a deficient judgment. Good nature is more agreeable in Converſation than Wit, and gives a certain air to the countenance which is more

amiable than Beauty. It ſhews virtue in the faireſt light; takes off in ſome meaſure from the deformity of vice, and makes even folly and impertinence ſupportable.

(20.) "I remember, ſays lord Herbert, that at the time I was about ſeven years old, I was corrected for going to cuffs with two ſchool-fellows, being both elder than myſelf; but never for telling a lye, or any other fault; my natural diſpoſition and inclination being ſo contrary to all falſehood, that, being demanded whether I had committed any fault whereof I might be juſtly ſuſpected, I did uſe ever to confeſs it freely; and thereupon chooſing rather to ſuffer correction, than to ſtain my mind with telling a lye, which I did judge then, no time could ever deface; and I can affirm to all the world truly, that from my firſt infancy to this hour, I told not willingly any thing that was falſe, my ſoul naturally having an antipathy to lying and deceit." See his Life, written by himſelf, p. 23.

(21.) Zeno the philoſopher being preſent, when a perſon of a loquacious diſpoſition play'd himſelf off, ſaid, with an air of concern in his countenance, "I perceive that poor gentleman is ill. He has a violent flux upon him." The company was alarm'd; and the rhetorician ſtopped in his career: "Yes," added Zeno, "The flux is ſo violent, that it has carried his ears into his tongue."

(22.) The ſignificance and importance of frivolous, trifling Converſation was ſmartly repreſented by a philoſopher: who being aſk'd how he left the company employed, made anſwer, "Some in milking the ram; others in holding the pail."

SERMON XVI.

On FRIENDSHIP.

JOHN xiii. 23.

Now there was leaning on Jeſus's boſom, One of his diſciples, whom Jeſus loved.

PLEASURE, to be really ſuch, muſt be the matter of our own free choice, our voluntary election: whatever is commanded, immediately becomes DUTY: and though by the goodneſs and wiſdom of the Commander, the paths of duty may lead to thoſe of pleaſantneſs, as in the caſe of religion; yet, ſtrictly and properly ſpeaking, Pleaſure can never be enjoined by any authority, can never ſubmit to the bonds of obligation.

A want of attention to this obvious remark, has drawn from the pen of a noble writer *, an unwary cenſure upon the goſpel of Chriſt,

* Lord Shaftſbury.

as if it were extremely deficient, "In having no where enjoined or required the exercise of FRIENDSHIP; a virtue, says he, the most amiable and excellent; which Epicurus himself taught and practised; and whose morality, he would insinuate from thence, is preferable to that of Jesus Christ."

We entirely agree, my young friends, with the noble writer, that no virtue can be more amiable and excellent than Friendship; no pleasures more refined and chearing, than those which Friendship affords. We mean to recommend them, as the most valuable acquisition, as the highest enjoyment of your lives. But at the same time, we do not, we cannot enjoin them as a Duty; we cannot bind them upon you, as indispensible Obligations: Nor, if you should miss of the pleasures of Friendship, if you should not be able to find that pearl of great price, a real Friend, shall we therefore condemn you as criminal, or adjudge you as guilty of an act of sin.

For "Friendſhip [we will take lord Shaftſbury's own definition] is that peculiar relation, which is formed by a conſent and harmony of minds, by mutual eſteem, and reciprocal tenderneſs and affection *." Never therefore, can Friendſhip be conſidered or enjoined as an indiſpenſible Duty, ſince our lot in life may never caſt us amongſt thoſe, whoſe minds may harmonize with our own: and conſequently the Goſpel could not enforce it as a duty. Friendſhip is rather to be conſidered as a rare and ſingular Bleſſing, vouchſafed perhaps to few, but when vouchſafed, one of the moſt exquiſite cordials in human life. 'Tis true, there are certain Virtues neceſſary to the preſervation and continuance of Friendſhip, once engaged in, of which we ſhall hereafter ſpeak, and the want whereof is highly criminal. But the Goſpel, as we ſhall find, very ſtrictly requires and enjoins theſe Virtues.

* Friendſhip has been otherwiſe well defined, "An union between juſt and good men, in their joint intereſt and concernment, and for the advancement thereof."

But though this be the exact ſtate of the caſe, though Friendſhip, conſidered as a peculiar and affectionate relation, formed by conſent and harmony of minds, could never be enforced under penal ſanctions as a duty in the goſpel, or any ſyſtem of morals: Yet they ſurely muſt be very blind, and very inattentive, who aſſert, that even this kind of Friendſhip is taken no notice of in our bleſſed religion. The EXAMPLE of the great Founder of our faith contradicts the aſſertion in the ſtrongeſt manner. JESUS, whoſe heart was warm with all the moſt commendable and generous affections of the human nature, felt, approved, and recommended "the felicity of particular Friendſhip." You have frequent mention of "HIS FRIEND" in the goſpel, under the ſtriking appellation of *the diſciple, whom Jeſus loved.* Jeſus undoubtedly loved all his diſciples, loved all mankind; but the love which he bore to this happy diſciple, this favoured JOHN, was of another and a different kind. His love to all the world was a love of benevolence and good will: His love to John was

a love of tenderneſs and affection, formed by a peculiar conſent and harmony of minds; "was the love of friend to friend."

St. John, however, doth not ſeem to have been the only perſon whom our bleſſed Lord diſtinguiſhed in this manner; he appears to have had a peculiar Friendſhip for Lazarus alſo. *Lord, behold* HE WHOM THOU LOVEST *is ſick*, was the meſſage which the afflicted ſiſters ſent to Jeſus; and which evidently expreſſes his tender and particular regard. Indeed all of this amiable family appear to have ſhared the peculiar Friendſhip of Chriſt. *He* LOVED *Martha, and her ſiſter, and Lazarus*, the ſacred writer tells us; and when, compaſſionate and tender-hearted, He wept over the grave of the latter, the remark of thoſe who ſtood by was, *Behold how He* LOVED *him!* In all which places, the words cannot be underſtood of that general Philanthropy or good will which Jeſus bore, and all his followers are enjoin'd to bear, towards each other; but of that "peculiar love," that affection and tenderneſs which we feel for

individuals, and which conſtitutes the "peculiar relation of Friendſhip."

Thus you learn, my young friends, (the more to recommend the virtue to you,) that Friendſhip is enforced by the goſpel, and in the only manner by which it could be enforced; namely, by the example of Him, whom it is your duty, as it will be your higheſt happineſs, to follow. And we may perhaps, on this view of the ſubject, without any danger adopt that noble writer's words, when he ſays, "I could be almoſt tempted to think, that the true reaſon why ſome of the moſt heroic virtues (as Friendſhip, &c.) have ſo little notice taken of them in our holy religion, is, becauſe there would have been ſo little room left for *diſintereſtedneſs*, had they been entitled to a ſhare of that infinite reward, which providence has by revelation aſſigned to other duties *." A remark, doubtleſs, in a great meaſure juſt, ſo far as "peculiar Friendſhip" is concerned;

* See the Characteriſtics, vol. i.

which being no Duty, can never be entered into on the view of future Rewards; which the utmoſt diſintereſtedneſs only can render truly ſincere; and the immediate purpoſe of which ſeems to be the augmentation of our private happineſs in this life: Though certainly, it muſt be allowed, that the Chriſtian Religion ſublimates Friendſhip to the higheſt perfection, by uniting ſouls in ſuch a bond of amity, as they are aſſured time itſelf can never deſtroy. Whence we learn, that true Chriſtian Friendſhip, founded on Virtue, on which all real friendſhip muſt be founded, is, and muſt neceſſarily be ſuperior to all friendſhip under every other ſyſtem; becauſe a friendſhip of this kind looks with confidence beyond the grave, and triumphs in a certain Eternity.

I muſt not, however, omit to obſerve, my young friends, (to corroborate at leaſt what I have advanced,) that as we acknowledge and hold the Divinity of the old Teſtament, as well as of the New; ſo to ſhew the perfect agreement and conformity of each with the

other, we may collect from thence both precepts * and examples of this divine virtue. Eminently pleaſing and heroic was the Friendſhip of David and Jonathan. *I am diſtreſſed for thee, my brother Jonathan*, ſays the plaintive and ſurviving David; *Very pleaſant haſt thou been unto me; thy love to me was wonderful; paſſing the love of women!* Indeed we muſt not expect to meet with many examples of this kind: True Friendſhip is rare; hath ever been rare in the world, ſo many qualifications are neceſſary to form and compleat it. It was enough for a David to find one Jonathan.

What has been thus far advanced appears to me ſufficient to vindicate the Goſpel, and to fix the right notion of Friendſhip. But before I proceed, permit me juſt to remark, that ſome by Friendſhip mean only "that benevolence, which unites virtuous minds in the ſacred bands of a ſpecial, cordial affection." And thus underſtood, never was

* See particularly the book of *Proverbs*.

Friendſhip more ſtrongly recommended, and enforced, than by the goſpel of Jeſus Chriſt; which requires us to love and to do good to all mankind. In this ſenſe Biſhop Taylor * obſerves well, that "Chriſtian charity is Friendſhip to all the world." And certainly, this charity, or love, is enjoined in the new Teſtament in the moſt forcible and exalted manner imaginable: *Hereby perceive We the love of God*, ſays St. John, *becauſe He* [Jeſus Chriſt, the God-Man] *lay'd down his life for us: And We* [after the example of ſuch conſummate love] *ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.*

Now though no benevolence can be carried to a nobler height, yet there ſeems to me no doubt, that particular Friendſhip is different from this general Benevolence; which requires the ſame love of good-will and brotherly ſervice to all our fellow Chriſtians. Whereas particular Friendſhip is an immediate attachment of the mind to a perſon

* See his *Opuſcula*, &c.

peculiarly choſen and beloved; for whom you have not only this general benevolence, but a tenderneſs and affection intereſting you more eſpecially in every thing which concerns him. It muſt however be allowed, that the high principle of Chriſtian Benevolence prevailing in the heart, is one of the beſt preparatives, as it is the nobleſt foundation for private Friendſhip.

Beſides, it ſhould be remarked, that univerſal as the benevolence of our minds ought to be, that benevolence in its exerciſe muſt be contracted within the ſphere of thoſe amongſt whom we dwell: and the nature of the human heart is ſuch, where it is not frozen up by chilling Selfiſhneſs, that it bears us warmly and irreſiſtibly to near and private connections, in which We may freely repoſe ourſelves, and find reſt: Where we may communicate our more intimate feelings, and by the reciprocal tenderneſs of affection, live to, and enjoy as it were, a ſecond ſelf *.

* Eſt enim verus Amicus, tanquam alter Idem. Cicero.

Intending man for ſocial happineſs, God, in great wiſdom and goodneſs, gave this impulſe to the human heart: and with equal wiſdom and goodneſs, He hath provided a variety of near and dear relations, in which man may freely allow to himſelf the full exerciſe of this heaven-implanted impulſe. One of theſe is "Friendſhip:" Right and commendable in itſelf, as we may fairly gather from this natural propenſity of the uncorrupted heart to it *. But that heart bears yet another teſtimony to the propriety and excellence of Friendſhip, by the tacit approbation which it immediately gives to, and the genuine reſpect and eſteem which it immediately feels for thoſe worthy Pairs, whoſe names are handed down to poſterity by the faithful hiſtorian, as eminent in this virtue, and peculiarly diſtinguiſhed for their reciprocal affection †. And the heart rarely errs

* Facile indicabat natura vim ſuam, &c.—Una eſt enim Amicitia in rebus humanis, de cujus utilitate omnes uno ore conſentiunt. Cicero de Amicitia.

† See the Anecdotes, No. 4. Ex omnibus ſæculis vix tria aut quatuor nominantur paria amicorum, &c. ſays Cicero,

or misleads us, in hints and admonitions of this kind. Here it is eminently faithful: for the Friendship which we thus as it were involuntarily approve and admire, is unquestionably, my young friends, one of the most singular pleasures and comforts of the human life.

For think, what a pleasure, what a comfort it is to have one in perfect amity with you, to whom you can at all times unbosom yourself with confidence and with safety! with whom you can enjoy all the refinements and the peculiar pleasures of rational conversation *! One, who will tenderly enter into and share all your griefs;—One, who will kindly participate in all your joys, thus heightening the one, and alleviating the other! What a pleasure to have a Friend, upon the wisdom and fidelity of whose coun-

in his treatise of Friendship; from whence I shall quote the more sparingly, as I could wish to recommend a frequent perusal of it.

* See p. 81.

ſels you can ſurely rely in all your difficulties, in all your embarraſſments; whoſe power and intereſt will always be ready to ſuccour and aſſiſt; or whoſe love, at leaſt, will always be forward to conſole, to delight, to chear and refreſh you! Providence gives nothing in mortal life more valuable, than ſuch a friend *! But the difficulty of the acquiſition is proportionate to the value: For, as we obſerved, nothing in mortal life is more rare; nor can we wonder at this, when we conſider not only the ſtate of the world, and the general attachment of men to ſelf-intereſt, but the variety of particulars neceſſary to render Friendſhip firm and endearing.

I cannot expreſs my own ſentiments better, or adviſe you, my young friends, more fully of the difficulties which attend the acquiſition of real Friendſhip, than in the words

* Solem è mundo tollere videntur, qui amicitiam à vitâ tollunt: quâ a Diis immortalibus nihil melius habemus, nihil jucundius, &c.—Cicero.

of one of the moſt maſterly writers of the age *. "When Socrates, ſays he, was building himſelf a houſe at Athens, being aſked by one, that obſerved the littleneſs of the deſign, why a man ſo eminent would not have an abode more ſuitable to his dignity, he replied, "That he ſhould think himſelf "ſufficiently accommodated, if he could ſee "that narrow habitation filled with real "friends." Such was the opinion of this great maſter of human life, concerning the infrequency of ſuch an union of minds, as might deſerve the name of Friendſhip. So many qualities are indeed requiſite to the poſſibility of Friendſhip, and ſo many accidents muſt concur to its riſe and its continuance, that the greateſt part of mankind content themſelves without it, and ſupply its place as they can, with intereſt and dependance.

"Multitudes are unqualified for a conſtant and warm reciprocation of benevolence, as

* Dr. Johnſon, in the Rambler, vol. ii.

they are incapacitated for any other elevated excellence, by perpetual attention to their Intereſt, and unreſiſting ſubjection to their Paſſions!—But not only this hateful and confirmed corruption, but many varieties or diſpoſition not inconſiſtent with common degrees of virtue, may exclude Friendſhip from the heart. Some, ardent enough in their benevolence, and defective neither in officiouſneſs nor liberality, are mutable and uncertain; ſoon attracted by new objects, diſguſted without offence, and alienated without enmity.—Others are ſoft and flexible; eaſily influenced by reports and whiſpers; ready to catch alarms from every dubious circumſtance, and to liſten to every ſuſpicion which envy and flattery ſhall ſuggeſt; to follow the opinion of every confident adviſer, and move by the impulſe of the laſt breath.—Some are impatient of contradiction; more willing to go wrong by their own judgment, than to be indebted for a better or a ſafer way to the ſagacity or another; inclined to conſider counſel as inſult, and enquiry as want of confidence;

and to confer their regard on no other terms than unreſerved ſubmiſſion and implicit compliance.—Some are dark and involved, equally careful to conceal good and bad purpoſes; and pleaſed with producing effects by inviſible means, and ſhewing their deſign only in its execution. Others are univerſally communicative, alike open to every Eye, and equally profuſe of their own ſecrets, and thoſe of others; without the neceſſary vigilance of caution, or the honeſt art of prudent integrity; ready to accuſe without malice, and to betray without treachery.—Any of theſe may be uſeful to the community, and paſs through the world with the reputation of good purpoſes and uncorrupted morals: but they are unfit for cloſe and tender Intimacies. He cannot properly be choſen for a Friend, whoſe kindneſs is exhaled by its own warmth, or frozen by the firſt blaſt of ſlander: He cannot be a uſeful Counſellor, who will hear no opinion but his own: He will not much invite confidence, whoſe principal maxim is to ſuſpect; nor can the candour and frankneſs of that

man be much eſteemed, who ſpreads his arms to human kind, and makes every man without diſtinction a denizon of his boſom."

You ſee, my young friends, from the above fine picture of human diſpoſitions,—drawn by the ſtrong pencil of this great moral maſter,—what difficulties attend the acquiſition of a real and conſtant friend. Yours, indeed, is that period of life, when this acquiſition is moſt commonly made, and made moſt firmly. Friendſhips contracted in youth, as moſt ſincere, are generally moſt laſting. The heart, in that happy ſeaſon, unpolluted by the vices, and unhackneyed in the ways of the world, obeys without reſerve its natural propenſity, and cleaves with undiſſembled ſincerity to ſimilar ſincerity with its own. Sameneſs of temper and ſentiment unites youthful minds, without any views of intereſt, without any ſhew of deſign; and as the loadſtone draws the iron, almoſt irreſiſtably attracts them *.

* Great Souls by Inſtinct to each other turn,
Demand Alliance, and in FRIENDSHIP burn.

Indulge, my young friends, the pleaſing, the generous impulſe: But, that the Friendſhips thus begun in youth, may laſt through life, and ſooth you to the cloſe with their pleaſures and their comforts, Suffer me to admoniſh you of that foundation, which alone can render Friendſhip firm and laſting. "It is VIRTUE:" the only ſure and ſolid baſis whereon it can be built. * If founded on other and leſs worthy motives, its continuance is ſhort, precarious; and as thoſe motives ſhift and vary, it will vary with them, like the vane with the wind. Indeed ſuch unions deſerve not the name of Friendſhip; they are and ſhould be deemed Confederacies only, ſo much the more dangerous and hurtful, as the cauſes uniting are more mean and vicious.

"No, my young friends, that "Friendſhip" may be at once fond and laſting, there muſt not only be equal VIRTUE on each part, but virtue of the ſame kind: not only the ſame end muſt be propoſed, but the ſame means muſt be approved by both. We are

* Nec ſine Virtute Amicitia eſſe ullo pacto poteſt, &c. Cicero.

often, by ſuperficial accompliſhments, and accidental endearments, induced to love thoſe whom we cannot eſteem; we are ſometimes, by great abilities and inconteſtible evidences of virtue, compelled to eſteem thoſe, whom we cannot love. But Friendſhip compounded of eſteem and love, derives from one its "Tenderneſs," and its "Permanence" from the other; and therefore requires not only that its candidates ſhould gain the Judgment, but that they ſhould attract the Affections: that they ſhould not only be firm in the day of diſtreſs, but gay in the hour of proſperity: not only uſeful in exigencies, but pleaſing and familiar in ſocial life. Their preſence ſhould give chearfulneſs as well as courage, and diſpel alike the gloom of fear and of melancholy.

To this mutual and virtuous complacency, is generally requiſite an uniformity of Opinions; at leaſt of thoſe active and conſpicuous principles, which diſcriminate parties in government, and ſects in religion; and which every day operate more or leſs in the

common buſineſs of life. Wherever theſe differences ſubſiſt, debates will ariſe,—vehemence, acrimony, and vexation, and in time an utter extinction of benevolence. Exchange of endearments and intercourſe of civility may continue, indeed, as boughs may for a while be verdant, when the root is wounded; but the poiſon of diſcord is infuſed, and though the countenance may preſerve its ſmile, the heart is hardening and contracting *."

But beſides *virtue*, and virtue of the ſame kind, ſimilarity of diſpoſitions, and leading opinions †, there are many other qualifica-

* See the Rambler, as before.

† I ſay *leading opinions*; a likeneſs of opinion and inclination is ſo far from being requiſite to form a benevolence in two minds towards each other, as is generally imagined, that I believe we ſhall find ſome of the firmeſt friendſhips to have been contracted between perſons of different humours; the mind being often pleaſed with thoſe perfections which are new to it, and which it does not find among its own accompliſhments. Beſides that a man in ſome meaſure ſupplies his own defects, and fancies himſelf at ſecond hand poſſeſſed of thoſe good qualities and endow-

tions requiſite to the refinement and perfection of Friendſhip: Such as, an openneſs and frankneſs of temper, joined at the ſame time with great faithfulneſs, prudence, and diſcretion; a conſtancy and firmneſs of mind, an evenneſs of behaviour; a ſuavity of manners *; an abſence of all jealouſy; a readineſs to overlook little faults and foibles; and an exquiſite and generous ſenſibility of ſoul; In ſhort, all the diſpoſitions which are directly oppoſite to thoſe we have mentioned before, as incapacitating for cloſe and tender intimacies: Diſpoſitions, my young friends, partly the produce of a kind and indulgent nature, and partly of virtuous and religious culture: rarely, it is true, found combining in one character, but where found, and approved by juſt obſervation and long acquaintance, the ſolid ground-

ments, which are in the poſſeſſion of him, who in the eye of the world is looked upon as his *other ſelf*. See the Spectator.

* Cicero ſays, Accedat autem Suavitas quædam oportet ſermonum atque morum haud quaquam mediocre condimentum amicitiæ.

work of the moſt pleaſing, the moſt uſeful, and the moſt permanent Friendſhip.

Let us not however forget, while we ſpecify theſe many good qualities, as neceſſary to be found in the perſon of a "true Friend," that if we mean to obtain that bleſſing, we are under every obligation to cultivate thoſe good qualities in Ourſelves. Here then, my young friends, you diſcern one of the ſingular advantages of virtuous Friendſhip: It peculiarly and almoſt neceſſarily conduces to your own improvement in virtue. For, as no Friendſhip can either be real or laſting, which is not founded as well as cemented by that Virtue, and thoſe good qualities above enumerated, it follows, that our entrance on this delightful union muſt encourage the cultivation of every right and amiable principle in the ſoul, and our continuance in it promote that cultivation, and bring all ſuch principles to their nobleſt perfection. Two virtuous minds will ſtimulate each other in every laudable proceeding; will guard each other from every wrong propen-

ſity, and criminal deviation: will prove a mutual ſupport, and never dare either of them to commit an action, which the other will hear of with concern, or behold with a bluſh. Nay, indeed, by the very force of imitation alone, their virtues will grow and increaſe: for there is no principle in our compoſition more natural, than the almoſt inſenſible imitation of thoſe whom we eſteem and admire, and with whom we are frequently converſant. Of ſuch conſequence, in every view, to your preſervation and improvement in the path of duty, is virtuous, diſintereſted Friendſhip.

Nor is this affectionate union of leſs utility for the improvement of the leſſer virtues, the graces of life, the arts of pleaſing, ſo important to our complete enjoyment of the bleſſings of Friendſhip; which when we find to depend ſo much on the "amiable attentions," and good diſpoſitions of our friend, we ſhall ſurely be ſollicitous to excel in thoſe attentions, and to be-

come amiable in proportion as we wiſh to be loved.

But to enumerate all the advantages and all the pleaſures of Friendſhip * would far exceed my limits;—that Friendſhip, which gives to human life its higheſt zeſt and reliſh; which affords to virtue a ſtrong ſupport and encouragement; and which is enforced and recommended by the higheſt example, that of the bleſſed Redeemer. Well, therefore, may we ſay, with the wiſe man †, "A faith-

* It is not poſſible to ſeparate the *advantages* of *Friendſhip* from Friendſhip itſelf: but it does not therefore follow, that Friendſhip is an *intereſted* thing. The truth is, that real Friendſhip cannot be entered upon or continue ſincere, *where* views of *worldly intereſt* alone lead to the union; but we can never enjoy true Friendſhip without great profit, as well as great pleaſure. So true is Cicero's aſſertion, that Non utilitatem amicitia, ſed utilitas amicitiam conſecuta eſt.

† See the Eccleſiaſtes, c. vi. v. 14. Mr. Addiſon has given a fine illuſtration (in the Spectator, No. 68.) of ſome paſſages in this excellent book, "which, he obſerves

ful friend is a ſtrong defence, and he that hath found ſuch a one hath found a treaſure. Nothing doth countervail a faithful friend, and his excellency is invaluable. A faithful friend is "the medicine of life;" and they that fear the Lord ſhall find Him. Whoſo feareth the Lord, ſhall direct his Friendſhip aright: For as He is, ſo ſhall his Friend be:" that is, pious and virtuous as He is himſelf, He ſhall meet with a friend equally virtuous, and pious to reward and bleſs Him!

Cultivate, therefore, my dear young friends, on every account cultivate virtuous Friendſhip: ſo will you aſſuredly cultivate Virtue and true Religion itſelf * ! But as this ineſtimable jewel is ſo rare, "you cannot be too

would be regarded by our modern wits as one of the moſt ſhining tracts of morality extant, if it appeared under the name of a Confucius, or of any celebrated Grecian philoſopher."

* Virtus, virtus inquam, conciliat amicitias, & conſervat. Cicero.

ſlow and cautious in your choice." Let me therefore adviſe, that "you run not on a ſudden into intimacies." The moſt frank and generous ſpirits are the moſt liable to this error. They are often ſtruck with the appearance of ſome ſhining qualities, in thoſe who are ſtrangers to them; affect the acquaintance of ſuch perſons, and an intimacy with them; the beginning of which perhaps greatly increaſes their affection, and carries them farther than diſcretion allows, and which a thorough acquaintance with the admired character convinces them was much too far. "If therefore thou wouldſt get a friend, (in the words of the Son of Sirach,) prove Him firſt, and be not haſty to credit Him: for ſome man is a friend for his own occaſion, and will not abide in the day of thy trouble: and there is a friend, who being turned to enmity and ſtrife, will diſcover thy reproach *."

* See Eccluſ. chap. vi. ver. 7. Cicero too adviſes, Sint igitur firmi, & ſtabiles & conſtantes eligendi: judicare difficile eſt ſanè niſi expertum: experiendum autem eſt in ipſâ amicitiâ, &c. See alſo Duchal's Sermons, vol. ii.

But, when you have once entered into this endearing relation; when, either in conſequence of the pleaſing, diſintereſted attachments of youth, or of more mature choice and deliberation *, you have gained that ſingular and choice bleſſing of an heart-

* Young people, at the early periods of life, commonly look upon each other as all *equals*: in which view Friendſhips, and very ſincere ones, may be formed amongſt thoſe who are very unequal in Station. But in general, Friendſhip ſhould be formed amongſt equals, to be laſting; as is well obſerved by the Rambler. "Friendſhip, ſays he, is ſeldom laſting, but between equals, or where the ſuperiority on one ſide is reduced by ſome equivalent advantage on the other. Benefits which cannot be repaid, and obligations which cannot be diſcharged, are not commonly found to increaſe affection; they excite gratitude indeed, and heighten veneration, but commonly take away that eaſy freedom, and familiarity of intercourſe, without which, though there may be fidelity, and zeal, and admiration, there cannot be Friendſhip. Thus imperfect are all earthly bleſſings! The great effect of Friendſhip is beneficence, yet by the firſt act of uncommon unkindneſs it is engendered, like plants that bear their fruit, and die. Yet this conſideration ought not to reſtrain bounty, or repreſs compaſſion: for duty is to be preferred before convenience; and he that loſes part of the pleaſures of Friendſhip by his generoſity, gains in its place the gratulation of his conſcience."

approved friend; felicitate your lot; and to ſecure the comfort, ſtudy to approve yourſelf by every worthy action, by every thing which may beſpeak your eſteem, affection, and confidence. *Be in peace with many; nevertheleſs have but one counſellor* [one boſom friend] *of a thouſand* *. Abhor, as the bane of Friendſhip, that worldly wiſdom which adviſes, "always to behave to your Friend, as ſuppoſing he may one day become your Enemy †." Away with that unworthy counſel, throwing the coldneſs of ſuſpicion into the generous warmth of undiſguiſed Friendſhip; which is always frank, unreſerved, and open. Rather, therefore, my young friends, be this your rule: Always behave to your friend in ſuch a manner, as is conſiſtent with the higheſt, pureſt virtue; with the moſt diſintereſted affection, and the tendereſt eſteem; that if a breach ſhould ever

* Ecclus. c. vi. v. 6.

† Scipio negabat ullam vocem inimiciorem amicitiæ potuiſſe reperiri, quam ejus qui dixiſſet, ita amare oportere, ut ſi aliquando eſſet oſurus, &c. Cicero.

unfortunately be made between you, you may freely lay open to God and man the honeſt and generous breaſt, where truth and innocence defy all the attacks of ſhame and reproach.

Among the qualifications requiſite for perfect Friendſhip, we recommended "Evenneſs or Conſtancy of behaviour." If you mean to keep your friend, by all means preſerve this conduct towards him. Thoſe inconſtant humouriſts, who are ever fluctuating, ever unſettled, are incapable either of the truth or the fine feelings of Friendſhip. But a Conſtancy in virtue is no leſs neceſſary than in behaviour; it is of great utility, on many occaſions, to know how to refuſe. Unlimited compliance is weakneſs. What is right and fit muſt ever be your rule: for the obligations of Virtue are prior to the obligations of Friendſhip *. And, agreeably to

* Nulla eſt igitur excuſatio peccati, ſi amici cauſâ peccaveris: nam cum conciliatrix amicitiæ virtutes opinio fuerit, difficile eſt amicitiam manere, ſi a virtute defecerit. Cicero.

this juſt idea, we ought to be as reſolute in animadverting upon faults, as in refuſing what is wrong. This is one of the moſt uſeful, though at the ſame time one of the moſt delicate and difficult offices of Friendſhip: and, "if poſſible, ſhould be ſo contrived, that our friend may perceive our advice and reproof is given him, not ſo much to pleaſe ourſelves, as for his own advantage. The reproofs therefore of a friend ſhould always be ſtrictly juſt, and not too frequent *."

Thus happy in the Choice of a friend, and in the proper behaviour towards him, cleave to him with the utmoſt fidelity; tried and approved, as he is, let nothing move you to change or forſake him, or to violate the ſacred, the indiſſoluble engagement: "grapple him, as it were, to your ſoul with hooks of ſteel:" for if we ought not, in

* Omni igitur in hâc re habenda ratio & diligentia eſt, primum ut monitio, acerbitate; deinde ut objurgatio contumeliâ careat, &c. Cicero.

prudence, to break * even with a faulty friend, that we may not expoſe the weakneſs of our choice; how much leſs with a worthy and amiable one, that we may not be upbraided with having loſt ſo valuable a treaſure! "Forſake not, therefore, an old friend, for the new is not comparable to him: a new friend is as new wine, when it is old thou ſhalt drink it with pleaſure." "Love thy friend, and be faithful unto him: but if thou bewrayeſt his ſecrets, follow no more after him †."

Thus mutually faithful and conſtant, what a fountain of perpetual pleaſures will you open to yourſelves, my young friends; a fountain, ever full and ever flowing with the moſt cordial and refreſhing delights! eſpecially if your Friendſhip, grounded on

* Cicero adviſes well, that if we are unhappily obliged at any time to *break* with our friends, "Tales amicitiæ ſunt remiſſione uſûs eluendæ, & *diſſuendæ* magis quam *diſcendendæ*, &c."

† See Ecclus. ix. 10. and xxvii. 17. Similar to this, Cicero ſays, Veterrima quoque (ut ea vina quæ vetuſtatem ferunt) eſſe debent ſuaviſſima, &c.

Chriſtian Virtue and real Religion, looks as it ought, beyond the grave, and triumphs in the aſſured, the glorious hope of an eternal union! Then what "Views" will chear and animate you! what "Converſation," high and excellent will engage and warm you! true Converſation, in all its moſt uſeful, its moſt pleaſing refinement*! Then what "zeal" for each other's ſpiritual welfare, and advancement in every high and honourable

* Mr. Addiſon has a pleaſing remark on Converſation, which will ſerve to elucidate my meaning here, as alſo ſome paſſages in the ſermon on Converſation: "One would think, ſays he, that the larger the company is in which we are engaged, the greater variety of thoughts and ſubjects would be ſtarted in diſcourſe: but inſtead of this we find, that Converſation is never ſo much ſtraitened and confined as in numerous aſſemblies. When a multitude meet together upon any ſubject of diſcourſe, their debates are taken up chiefly with forms, and general poſitions; nay, if we come into a more contracted aſſembly of men and women, the talk generally runs upon the weather, faſhions, news, and the like public topics. In proportion as Converſation gets into clubs and knots of friends, it deſcends into particulars, and grows more free and communicative: But the moſt open, inſtructive, and unreſerved diſcourſe, is that which paſſes between "two perſons, who are familiar and intimate "friends." On theſe occaſions a man gives a looſe to

perfection will glow in your boſoms; and how will you mutually delight, as to promote each others "good," ſo to promote the good of all your fellow-creatures; exhorting and ſtimulating each his friend to the conſtant, the chearing exertion of univerſal benevolence and love! The divine grace operating on your minds, amidſt this amiable diſcharge of duty,—this friendly contention, as it were, to excel in goodneſs,—will daily improve your minds; will daily more and more advance and confirm thoſe tempers and diſpoſitions, which are ſo neceſſary to the being and the continuance of Friendſhip: will daily make you more and more mild, gentle, faithful, conſcientious, and diſintereſted; in ſhort, will make you to grow more and more daily in that *Chriſtian love*, that univerſal good-will, that god-like principle, which is of all others the beſt ground-work of Friend-

every paſſion and every thought that is uppermoſt, diſcovers his moſt retired opinions of perſons and things, tries the beauty and ſtrength of his ſentiments, and expoſes his whole ſoul to the examination of his friend." Spectator, No. 68.

ſhip; the moſt ſolid foundation of an alliance, beyond the reach of time to deſtroy!

See then, in this particular, how admirably the Chriſtian Religion is calculated to carry to its moſt exalted height this ſacred union of minds, which all the world has agreed to venerate; and what a peculiar proviſion it makes for the ſevereſt ſhock this union can receive, when all-commanding Nature enjoins its diſſolution! The friend, the Chriſtian friend, laments not his beloved companion, dear to him as his own ſoul—he laments him not as loſt; he grieves not as one without hope: But far beyond the regions of the grave, the limits of time, he looks to that kingdom and that period, when he ſhall be united in immortal, in everlaſting bonds of amity, and enjoy in all its perfection that Friendſhip, whoſe delights have ſo cheared and bleſs'd him in his pilgrimage through earth.

Great and generous ſouls, even in the dark uncertain ſtate of Heatheniſm, were not

willing to forego the pleaſing, though doubtful idea of this bleſſed re-union *. Something intimated to their hearts the proſpect and probability of it; and that probability awakened at once in them the nobleſt ſentiments and the ſweeteſt comforts! How much rather then, my young friends, ſhould the certainty, the tranſporting certainty of a future life and immortality, brought to light through our great Redeemer, chear, animate, and inſpire you! How much rather ſhould it influence you to fidelity and affection in your Friendſhips, to reflect, that you may enjoy here all the bleſſings which that noble paſſion communicates, under the full, the bliſsful perſuaſion, that you never ſhall be deprived of thoſe benefits; But when death ſhall diſmiſs you from your labours and trials below, eternal Friendſhip and love ſhall meet and crown you with tranſport, in the kingdom of Truth, of Peace, and of Glory; *which*, &c.

* See the cloſe of Cicero's treatiſes de Senectute, & de Amicitiâ.

ANECDOTES reſpecting FRIENDSHIP.

(1.) Athenodorus the philoſopher, by reaſon of his great age, begged leave to retire from the court of Auguſtus; which the emperor accordingly granted him. In making his compliments on the occaſion, as he was about to withdraw, "Remember, Cæſar, ſaid he, whenever you are angry, that you ſay or do nothing, before you have diſtinctly repeated to yourſelf the four and twenty letters of the alphabet." Upon this Cæſar, catching him haſtily by the hand, cried out; "Stay, ſtay, Athenodorus! I have need of thy preſence longer ſtill;" and ſo detained him another year. This incident is celebrated by the ancients as a rule of excellent wiſdom, and does high honour to this intrepid and honeſt counſellor to the world's maſter.

(2.) At the ſiege of Bridgenorth Caſtle, in the Reign of Henry II. which was defended by Roger de Mortimer, the king expoſed himſelf to ſo much danger, that he would have been ſlain, if a faithful vaſſal had not

preferred his ſovereign's life to his own. For, while he was buſied in giving orders too near the wall, Hubert de St. Clare, conſtable or governor of Colcheſter Caſtle, who ſtood by his ſide, ſeeing an arrow aimed at Henry by one of Mortimer's archers, ſtepped before him, and received it in his own breaſt. The wound was mortal: he expired in the arms of his maſter, recommending his daughter (an only child, and an infant) to the care of that prince. It is hard to ſay which moſt deſerves admiration; a Subject who died to ſave his king, or a King, whoſe perſonal virtues could render his ſafety ſo dear to a ſubject, whom he had not obliged by any extraordinary favours. The daughter of Hubert was educated by Henry with all the affection that he owed to the memory of her father; and, when ſhe had attained to maturity, was honourably married to William de Longueville, a nobleman of great diſtinction, on condition of his taking the name of St. Clare, which the grateful Henry was deſirous to perpetuate.

(3.) Monſieur Sedaine, in his "Diſcourſe upon the Qualifications which conſtitute the Beauty of the Soul," informs us, That a certain gentleman of rank loſt a friend, who at his death left debts unpaid, and two children very young. The ſurviving friend was immediately obſerved to retrench his houſehold, his equipage, and take lodgings in a ſmall houſe; from whence he walked every day to the palace, followed by one footman, and performed the duties of his poſt. He is inſtantly ſuſpected of avarice, and of bad conduct, and undergoes a variety of calumnies. In ſhort, at the end of two years, he reappears in the world; having accumulated a ſum of 20,000 livres, which he applied to the ſervice of his deceaſed friend's children, and thus reſcued a worthy memory from ſhame, and a helpleſs offſpring from miſery and ruin. It is pity our author had not informed us of the Name of a man, whoſe conduct is ſo honourable to Friendſhip and humanity.

(4.) This heroic action recalls to mind another ſomewhat like it, which is recorded in hiſtory. Eudamidas of Corinth, a very poor man, drawing near his end, his mother and daughter were thereby threatened with indigence and diſtreſs: He however was no way alarmed at the news; but, judging of the hearts of Aretæus and Charixenes, his wealthy and faithful friends, by his own, juſt in the article of death, he made this memorable will. "I bequeath to Aretæus, the maintenance of my mother, and her ſupport under old age; and to Charixenes, I bequeath and appoint the diſpoſal of my daughter in marriage, and giving her the beſt dower in his power to beſtow: and in caſe, either of my ſaid two friends ſhould happen to die; then I ſubſtitute the ſurvivor to perform that which the other ſhould have done, had he lived." This teſtament being read, they who knew the poverty of Eudamidas, but not his connection with the legatees, looked upon the whole matter as a piece of pleaſantry, and went out laughing at the legacies aſſigned them. But the latter as ſoon as ever they

heard of it, immediately came, acknowledged, and ſolemnly ratified what was enjoined them in the will. Charixenes, however, we are informed, died within a few days after; upon which Aretæus, his excellent ſucceſſor, took upon him the two-fold charge; kept the mother of Eudamidas with a tender and filial care, and in due time married off the daughter of the deceaſed the ſame day with his own daughter, and gave her an equal portion of his effects. The celebrated Nicholas Pouſſin's pencil has immortalized this great action; painting Eudamidas at the moment when life ſeems expiring, and he is dictating this memorable laſt will.

(5.) There is ſomething in Friendſhip ſo very great and noble, that in thoſe fictitious ſtories which are invented to the honour of any particular perſon, the authors have thought it as neceſſary to make their hero a Friend, as a Lover. Achilles has his Patroclus, and Æneas his Achates. In the firſt of theſe inſtances we may obſerve (for the reputation of the ſubject in queſtion) that Greece was

almoſt ruined by the heroe's love, but was preſerved by his Friendſhip. The character of Achates ſuggeſts to us an obſervation, which we may often make, on the intimacies of great men; who frequently chooſe their companions rather for the qualities of the heart than thoſe of the head; and prefer fidelity in an eaſy, inoffenſive, complying temper, to thoſe endowments which make a much greater figure among mankind. I don't remember that Achates, who is repreſented as the firſt favourite, either gives his advice, or ſtrikes a blow, through the whole Æneid. A Friendſhip which makes the leaſt noiſe, is very often the moſt uſeful; for which reaſon I ſhould prefer a prudent friend to a zealous one. Spectator, N°. 385.

(6.) Seneca, taking notice of Auguſtus Cæſar's lamenting upon a certain occaſion, the death of Mecænas and Agrippa, obſerves, "That he who could inſtantly repair the deſtruction of whole fleets and armies, and bid Rome, after a general conflagration, riſe out of her aſhes even with more luſtre than before;

was yet unable, during a whole life, to fill up thoſe laſting vacancies in his Friendſhip." A reflection, than which nothing can more beautifully illuſtrate the excellence of this noble paſſion.

(7.) If men would place their firſt ambition upon the virtue of their actions, and attempt things only becauſe it is their duty to attempt them, grace of action would naturally attend the integrity of their hearts, and a becoming deportment crown their honeſt deſigns. A young man of quality, we are told, by a ſudden accident became an accompliſhed orator in one day. The occaſion was this. A gentleman, who had chaſtiſed a ruffian for an inſolence towards a kinſwoman of his, was ſtigmatiſed with very outrageous language in a certain company, where the young nobleman happened to be preſent. When his friend's name was thus maltreated from man to man, the ingenuous youth diſcovered the utmoſt pain to thoſe who ſat near him; and having more than once ſaid, "I am ſure I could fight for

him: why then can't I ſpeak for him?" at laſt he ſtood up. The eyes of the whole company were upon him; and though in his confuſion he appeared utterly to have forgot what he roſe to ſpeak, the generous motive with which they all knew him to be actuated procured him ſuch an acclamation of voices to hear him, that he expreſſed himſelf with a magnanimity and clearneſs, proceeding from the integrity of his heart, which made his very adverſaries receive him as a man whom they wiſhed their friend. The beſt way to do a thing as you ought, is to do it only becauſe you ought.

(8.) It is related, as one of the chief excellencies of Mr. Bonnel, late Accomptant General in Ireland, That he was a moſt ſincere, faithful, and zealous friend, and had all thoſe qualities which could render his Friendſhip deſirable; firmneſs and reſolution, candour and openneſs, prudence, generoſity, and love. He declined no trouble, no hazards to ſerve his Friends; he aſſiſted, he adviſed them in all their doubts and difficulties, and conſtantly prayed for them. And he had

one property of a true friend, very rarely to be met with, becauſe true Friendſhip is ſo;—which was, always to deal plainly with his friends, and tell them what he diſliked in their conduct: but this he did not in a haughty imperious way, but with the prudent endearments and tenderneſs, as well as ſincerity of a good man;—in ſuch a manner, as by his reproofs to oblige them, and to fix them faſter to his Friendſhip. See his Life, p. 231.

(9.) The very ingenious and amiable Biſhop Berkely, of Cloyne in Ireland, was ſo intirely contented with his income in that dioceſe, that when offered by the Earl of Cheſterfield (then Lord Lieutenant) a biſhoprick much more beneficial than that he poſſeſſed, he declined it with theſe words; "I love my neighbours, and they love me. Why then ſhould I begin, in my old days, to form new connections, and tear myſelf from thoſe friends, whoſe kindneſs is to me the greateſt happineſs I enjoy."—Acting in this inſtance like the celebrated Plutarch, who, being aſked, why he reſided in his

native city, ſo obſcure and ſo little? "I ſtay, ſaid he, leſt it ſhould grow leſs."

(10.) At the battle of Roucoux in 1746, a ſerjeant of the regiment of Flanders, named Vidal, giving his arm to the prince of Monaco (who was wounded) in order to lead him to a place of ſafety, had that very arm broken to pieces by a muſket ball. Without betraying the leaſt emotion, this dauntleſs heroe only changed his arm, ſaying; "Take this, my prince; the other is now good for nothing."

(11.) Pſammenitus, king of Egypt, was taken priſoner by Cambyſes, and carried out of his own kingdom into Perſia. The victor, more keenly to inſult and afflict their wretched parents, ordered the young princeſs, Pſammenitus's daughter, and all the other young ladies of quality, whom he had brought captive, to go dreſs'd in the habit of ſlaves, carrying water upon their backs. While the reſt of the Egyptians were quite diſtracted at this ſpectacle, Pſammenitus remained very calm, with his eyes fixed upon the ground,

Soon after, Cambyſes ordered his ſon, the young Egyptian prince, with ſeveral of the young noblemen his companions, to be led forth tied together by the necks, and bridled like horſes, with bits in their mouths. Pſammenitus, upon this additional ſhock, was the only perſon who refrained from tears: But, happening to eſpy a certain familiar Friend of his go about begging, in a naked, ſtarving condition; upon calling to his friend, he burſt into a flood of tears, beating his head after the manner of the barbarians. Cambyſes hearing the ſingularity of his behaviour, demanded to know the reaſon why he remained ſilent and unmoved upon viewing the calamity of his children, and was all on a ſudden ſo much afflicted at ſeeing the diſtreſſes of a poor old man. "O ſon of Cyrus, anſwered Pſammenitus, domeſtick miſeries, arrived to this violent height, are more grievous than to admit of tears. But to ſee my Friend, reduced from a ſtate of eaſe and affluence to this extremity of diſtreſs and want, in the very verge of life, This is an object that commands my tears."

(12.) Monſieur du Chatelet, a privy-counſellor to Louis XIII. very earneſtly ſolliciting the pardon of M. de Montmorency; the king ſaid to him, "I verily think, you would have loſt your arm for Montmorency." —"Sire," ſaid he to his ſovereign, "I would willingly have loſt both, as being uſeleſs in your Majeſty's ſervice, ſo I might but be able to ſave one, who has gained ſo many battles for you. It is not intereſt, Sire, it is Friendſhip, which implores your mercy." —Can it be wondered that ſuch pleading ſhould obtain all it aſked?

(13.) While M. de Bouteville was under proſecution, the ſame M. du Chatelet drew up a caſe in his defence. Cardinal Richelieu, enraged at the uſe which Chatelet had made of his eloquence, reproached him with having employed it to condemn the Juſtice of the king. "O pardon me," ſaid M. du Chatelet, "I have wiſhed to juſtify the king's Mercy, if he has the kindneſs to extend it, towards one of the moſt valiant men of his kingdom."

(14.) Cicero, in his oration for Ligarius, ſays very beautifully, Homines ad Deos nullâ re propius accedant, quam ſalutem dando hominibus. "Men cannot come nearer to the Divine nature, than in the ſaving men from death."

(15.) "There is a friend that ſticketh cloſer than a brother, and a faithful friend is known in adverſity:" the following is a pleaſing inſtance. When Dean Swift was at Sir Arthur Acheſon's, at Market-hill, in the county of Armagh, an old gentleman was recommended to him, as having been a remarkable cavalier in the reigns of Charles II. James II. and William III. who had behaved with great loyalty and bravery in Scotland, during the troubles of thoſe reigns, but was neglected by the government, although he deſerved great rewards from it. As he was reduced in his circumſtances, the Dean made him a handſome preſent; but ſaid, at the ſame time, "This trifle, Sir, cannot ſupport you long, and your friends may grow tired of you; therefore I would have you contrive ſome honeſt means of get-

ting a ſum of money, ſufficient to put you into a way of life for ſupporting yourſelf with independency in your old age." To this Captain Creichton (for that was the gentleman's name) anſwered, "I have tired all my friends, and cannot expect any ſuch extraordinary favours."—"Sir, replied the Dean, I have heard much of your adventures; that they are freſh in your memory; that you can tell them with great humour; and that you have taken memorandums of them in writing." The Captain anſwered, I have; but no one can underſtand them but myſelf. "Well, then, Sir, rejoined the Dean, get your manuſcripts, read them to me, and tell me none but genuine ſtories; and then I will place them in order of time for you, prepare them for the preſs, and endeavour to get you a ſubſcription among my friends, as you may do among your own." The Captain ſoon after waited on the Dean with his papers, and related to him many adventures, which the Dean was ſo kind as to put in chronological order, to correct the ſtyle, and make a ſmall book of them, intituled, "The Memoirs of Captain John

Creichton." A ſubſcription was immediately ſet on foot, by the Dean's intereſt and recommendation, which raiſed for the Captain above 200l. and made the remaining part of his life very happy and eaſy. Theſe "Memoirs of Captain Creichton," are inſerted in the 13th volume of the Dean's works, and ſtand an immortal monument of polite and diſintereſted Friendſhip.

(16.) The "Stage" (ſays Mr. Addiſon, ſpeaking of the employment of time) might be made a perpetual ſource of the moſt noble and uſeful entertainments, were it under proper regulations. But, the mind never unbends itſelf ſo agreeably, as in the Converſation of a well choſen "Friend." There is indeed no bleſſing of life, that is any way comparable to the enjoyment of a diſcreet and virtuous friend. It eaſes and unloads the mind; clears and improves the underſtanding, engenders thoughts and knowledge, animates virtue and good reſolution, ſooths and allays the paſſions, and finds employment for moſt of the vacant hours of life. Next to ſuch an intimacy with a particular perſon,

one would endeavour after a more general Converſation, with ſuch as are able to entertain and improve thoſe with whom they converſe; which are qualifications that ſeldom go aſunder." See Spectator, N°. 93, alſo Numbers 385, 399; and the Chriſtian's Magazine, vol. iv. p. 481.

(17.) Two perſons being upon their journey to *Delphos*, were ſet upon by thieves; and while one of them was no farther ſollicitous than how to make his eſcape, the other was killed. The ſurvivor continued his travels; But when he came to the Oracle, the God rejected his addreſs, expelled him the temple, and reproached his cowardice and baſe deſertion of his friend, in the following manner.

Do not, preſumptuous wretch! theſe rites profane,
Nor with polluted gifts our altars ſtain;
Nor prudent fears, and threatening fate pretend;
Falſe to thy God, thy honour, and thy friend!

These claim thy blood in any danger near,
And must condemn that base and guilty fear,
Which of a Coward made a treacherous Murderer.
Henceforth dare to be just and brave; for know,
He that declines to ward it, gives the blow.

(18.) Friendship is well defined, "A strong and habitual inclination in two persons to promote the good and happiness of each other;" and Aristotle affirms of real Friendship, that it is a soul, which inhabits two bodies. Spencer speaks of each kind of life with great justice, but attributes the highest praise to Friendship: And indeed there is no disputing the point, but by making that Friendship take place between two married persons; in which most happy case, 'tis a something transcendantly delightful; which is not absolutely one or the other; but is more than both, and cannot be expressed. The poet's words are these:

Hard is the doubt, and difficult to deem,
When all three kinds of love together meet,
And do diſpart the heart with power extreme,
Whether ſhall weigh the ballance down; To wit,
The dear affection unto Kindred ſweet,
Or raging fire of love to Woman kind,
Or zeal of Friends, combin'd by Virtues meet:
But, of them all, the band of virtuous mind,
Methinks the gentle heart ſhould moſt aſſured bind.
For natural affection ſoon doth ceaſe,
And quenched is with Cupid's greater flame;
But faithful FRIENDSHIP doth them both ſuppreſs,
And them with maſtering diſcipline doth tame,
Through thoughts aſpiring to eternal fame.
For, as the Soul doth rule this earthly maſs,
And all the ſervice of the Body frame;
So love of Soul doth love of Body paſs,
No leſs than perfect gold ſurmounts the meaneſt braſs."

(19.) Never perhaps was there a more ſincere and elegant Friendſhip, than that which ſubſiſted between Scipio and Lælius. The former was one of the greateſt generals and beſt men that Rome ever produced; the other, for his probity and prudence was diſtinguiſhed by the ſurname of "the Wiſe." They were almoſt of the ſame age, and had the ſame inclination, benevolence of mind, taſte for learning of all kinds, principles of government and zeal for the public good. If Scipio took place in the point of military glory, his friend had perhaps the ſuperiority in reſpect of eloquence. But let us hear Lælius himſelf upon ſo intereſting a ſubject. "As for me, of all the gifts of nature or fortune, there are none, I think, comparable to the happineſs of having Scipio for my friend. I found in our Friendſhip a perfect conformity of ſentiments, in reſpect to publick affairs; an inexhauſtible fund of counſels and ſupports in private life; with a tranquillity and delight not to be expreſſed. I never gave Scipio the leaſt offence to my knowledge, nor ever heard a word eſcape him, that

did not pleaſe. We had but one houſe, and one table at our common expence, the frugality of which was equally the taſte of both: For war, in travelling, in the country, we were always together. I do not mention our ſtudies, and the attention of us both always to learn ſomething. This was the employment of all our leiſure hours, removed from the ſight and commerce of the world." Is there now any thing comparable to a Friendſhip like that here deſcribed? "What a conſolation is it (ſays Tully) to have a ſecond-ſelf, to whom we have nothing ſecret, and into whoſe heart we may pour out our own with perfect unreſerve? Could we taſte proſperity ſo ſenſibly, if we had no one to ſhare with us in our joy? And what a relief is it in adverſity, to have a friend ſtill more affected with it than ourſelves?"—But what more highly exalts the value of the Friendſhip in queſtion, was, its not being founded at all in intereſt, but ſolely in eſteem for each others virtues. "What occaſion, ſays Lælius, could Scipio have for me? Undoubtedly none; nor I for him. But my attach-

ment to him was the effect of my high eſteem and admiration of his virtues; and his to me aroſe from the favourable idea he entertained of my character and manners. This Friendſhip increaſed afterwards on both ſides, by habit and commerce. We both, indeed, derived great advantages from it, but theſe were not our views when we began to love each other."—Nothing upon earth can be ſo deſirable as ſuch an amity. But in vain do we ſeek it among the ignorant, the vain, the ſelfiſh, or men of looſe and profligate principles. We muſt ſoon be aſhamed of loving the man whom we cannot eſteem. 'Tis David and Jonathan, 'tis Damon and Pythias, Tully and Atticus, Scipio and Lælius, and ſuch only who can truly taſte and dignify pure Friendſhip; and ſuch only can ſay with Ovid, "Nos duo Turba ſumus:" We two are a Multitude. See Ciceto de Amicitia, and Stretch's Beauties of Hiſtory, p. 259.

(20.) His late Royal Highneſs Frederick Prince of Wales,—who amongſt his other

great qualities, was the patron of merit, and the friend of mankind,—was frequently viſited by perſons of diſtinguiſhed abilities, with whom he contracted a ſtrict intimacy. Among theſe, Mr. Gl——, (who is as juſtly celebrated for the amiableneſs of his character, as for the qualifications of an orator and a poet) had a conſiderable ſhare in his eſteem. One day the Prince obſerved at his levée that he had not ſeen this gentleman for ſome time, and aſking if he was well, was told that Mr. Gl—— was under difficulties on account of ſome loſſes in trade, which had ſo diſcouraged him, that he was aſhamed to appear in his Highneſs's preſence. The Prince replied, "I am ſorry for it;" and preſenting a bank note of 500l. to a gentleman who ſtood by, added, "Carry this to Mr. Gl—— as a ſmall teſtimony of my affection, and aſſure him from me, that I ſympathize in his affliction, and ſhall be always glad to ſee him."

(21.) In the time of the proſcription by the triumvirate at Rome, a grievous puniſhment was denounced againſt any perſon who

ſhould conceal or any way aſſiſt the proſcribed; as, on the other hand, great rewards were promiſed to thoſe who ſhould diſcover their hiding places. Marcus Varro, the philoſopher, was in the liſt of perſons proſcribed; at which time, his dear friend Calenus tenderly received and concealed him ſeveral days in his houſe; and though Anthony came often thither to walk and converſe, yet was Calenus never affrighted, nor changed his mind, though he daily ſaw other men puniſhed or rewarded, according to the purport of the bloody edict.

(22.) Camerarius obſerves, That at Rome were to be ſeen theſe verſes engraven on an urn.

D. D. S.

Urna brevis geminum, quamvis tenet iſta cadaver,
Attamen in cœlo ſpiritus unus adeſt:
Viximus unanimes, Luciusque & Flavius, idem
Senſus, amor, ſtudium, vita duobus erat.

That is,

Though both our ashes this small urn inclose,
Yet, as one soul, in Heaven we repose:
Lucius and Flavius living were one mind,
One will, one love, and to one course inclin'd.

(23.) That ancient philosopher whose precept it was, "to converse with our Friends, as if they might one day become our Enemies," has been justly censured by Scipio, as advancing a very ungenerous maxim; nor would he believe it could have been uttered by Bias, one of the seven sages, but rather by some groveling or ambitious sophist, engrossed solely by the things of interest and blind self-love. However, to remember that we must one day most certainly be divided from those friends we now so dearly love, is a reflection, methinks, that should enter with us into this and all our tender connections of every kind. Death, says Seneca, falls heavy upon him, who is too much known to others, and too little to himself; and Pontanus, a man celebrated among the early

reſtorers of literature, thought the ſtudy of our own hearts of ſo much importance, that he has recommended it, like a ſincere friend, even from his tomb. "Sum *Johannes Jovianus Pontanus*, quem amaverunt bonæ muſæ, ſuſpexerunt viri probi, honeſtaverunt reges domini: Jam ſcis qui ſim, vel qui potius fuerim. Ego vero te, hoſpes, noſcere in tenebris nequeo, ſed teipſum ut noſcas rogo." I am *Pontanus*, beloved by the powers of literature, admired by men of worth, and dignified by the monarchs of the world. Thou knoweſt now who I am, or, more properly, who I was. For thee, ſtranger, I who am in darkneſs cannot know thee, but I intreat thee to know thyſelf."—We hope every reader of theſe anecdotes will conſider himſelf as engaged to the obſervation of a precept, which the wiſdom and virtue of all ages have concurred to enforce; a precept, dictated by philoſophers, inculcated by ſages, and ratified by ſaints. See Rambler, N°. 28.

(24.) Euſebius and Pamphilus, were Chriſtian friends, whoſe love was ſo cloſe and intenſe, that their hiſtorian ſays, as if in alluſion to the language of the ſacred writer, Deut. xiii. 6. that *they ſeemed to have but one ſoul between them*; and when the martyrdom of the latter had ſeparated them from the preſence of each other, and put a ſtop to the former exchange of good offices between them; yet it did not put an end to their league of love and amity, but the ſurvivor copied the pattern, aſſumed the name, and wrote the hiſtory of his former dear companion; and continued to enjoy his friend in a ſenſe and method, which Heathen principles could not have taught or ſupported.

SERMON XVII.

PART I.

On the right and induſtrious Employment of TIME.

PROVERBS vi. 6, &c.

Go to the Ant, thou ſluggard, conſider her ways, and be wiſe: which, having no guide, overſeer, or ruler, provideth her meat in the ſummer, and gathereth her food in the harveſt.

WONDER not, my young friends, that I enumerate amongſt thoſe PLEASURES which I would recommend to you, as ſubſtantial and ſincere, "the right and induſtrious employment of Time." You perhaps, judging either from the report of corrupt nature, or the falſe mirror of faſhionable life, might rather ſuppoſe that Pleaſure to be found in diſſipation and indolence; in the whirl of gaiety, and the round of amuſement. But let us liſten awhile to the

voice of reaſon and reflection, and no doubt we ſhall ſoon be convinced, that as no poſſeſſion in the hands of mortals is more valuable and important than TIME, ſo no ſatisfaction is more grateful and real, than that which ariſes from a retroſpect of Time, well and induſtriouſly employed.

The wiſe man in the text refers us to the Ant, not only as an example of "Induſtry," but of "the provident uſe of Time:" For ſhe, with infinite and unwearied aſſiduity, *gathereth* her little ſtore; and ſhe gathereth it *in the ſummer, in the harveſt*, improving wiſely the ſeaſon for her ſupply; and thus rejoicing in the winter over the fruits of her well-tim'd application and pains.

'Tis a leſſon, my young friends, worthy your moſt ſerious conſideration; for from the meaneſt inſect, from the loweſt reptile you may gather inſtruction: *Aſk now the beaſts, and they will teach thee*, ſays Job, *and the fowls of the air, and they will inform thee* *.

* Job xii. 7.

Man, like the Ant, has his ſummer, his harveſt, his ſeaſon for laying up a ſtore to rejoice and refreſh his ſoul, at a time when all power of providing will be utterly precluded: and if haply he neglect or miſemploy that ſeaſon, wretched indeed will be his penury and his ſuffering; a winter of indigence and woe!

What a motive, my young friends, to improve this important ſeaſon, which is happily now in your power: You will find it no leſs your indiſpenſible "Duty," than your higheſt "Wiſdom," and trueſt "Pleaſure."

That it is your "indiſpenſible duty," you cannot doubt a moment, when you conſider the end for which all "Time" is given you. Certainly not to ſquander away in fooliſh, frivolous or vicious purſuits, not to waſte in doing nothing or in doing ill; but to be employed in ſuch a manner as becomes a probationer for eternity, on the ſtage of this ſhort and precarious life. Contemplate yourſelf in this right view, and you will be

convinced, that as of all the talents delivered to man, by his great Lord and Maſter, Time is the moſt conſiderable; ſo is he under the higheſt obligations to improve that precious depoſit. Indeed, upon the due improvement of it depends the performance of all his duties; and conſequently, the miſuſe of Time will neceſſarily defeat all the great ends which HE benevolently propoſed, who gave to man this Time, this important ſeaſon to work out his ſalvation, and to ſecure immortality. One cannot therefore well conceive a greater offence againſt God, than a waſte or miſapplication of thoſe moments, which he hath deſtined to the nobleſt uſes, the beſt ends; and which (infinitely to enhance the value) once loſt are recoverable no more. Suffer your youth to glide away unimproved! —ſuffer that Harveſt of future life to paſs uncultivated, ungathered! alas, my friends, no power or might in mortality can recall the favourable ſeaſon! In the ſad winter of deſolate life, we can only lament our unthrifty neglect, or vile prodigality! and the end of all will be, moſt probably, not

only the bitter remonſtrances of upbraiding conſcience here, but the ſtill more bitter remonſtrances of that conſcience for ever; that *worm which never dieth!*

Inferior, it is true, but not leſs real are the obligations we are under to improve our Time, from the debt we owe to ſociety, to our friends. We live not for ourſelves, we cannot live for ourſelves: united in ſociety with our fellow-mortals, we owe them reciprocal returns for the advantages which we receive from their union and intercourſe: and ſo far as we refuſe or withhold theſe returns, we offend againſt the laws of ſociety, and make ourſelves unworthy of its benefits *. But how is it poſſible that they ſhall diſcharge their duty, and perform the neceſſary offices of their place and ſtation, who indolently

* Unum debet eſſe omnibus propoſitum, (ſays Cicero, de Offic. lib. 3.) ut eadem ſit utilitas uniuſcujuſque & univerſorum: quam ſi ad ſe quiſque rapiat, diſſolvetur omnis humana conſortio.—Alteri vivas oportet, (ſays Seneca, Epiſt. 48.) ſi vis tibi vivere: hæc ſocietas diligenter & fuſtè obſervanda eſt, quæ nos omnes omnibus miſcet & indicat aliquòd eſſe commune jus generis humani.

waſte or wickedly miſemploy the moments, which ought to be occupied in the neceſſary and worthy functions of life? Cicero hath well obſerved that every hour hath its proper duty *. If we would improve our Time, and diſcharge the debt we owe to ſociety, as well as to ourſelves, we ſhall be careful to fulfil that duty; to employ ourſelves in the exerciſe of every virtue and every office, which our ſituation enjoins and requires.

And what "Wiſdom" can be greater? Candidates for a bliſsful immortality, a ſhort period is allotted us to prove ourſelves worthy: a diſcharge of duty is the right improvement of that period; and that diſcharge not only ſecures the high felicity ſet before us, but in the mean time, peculiarly conduces to our preſent welfare and ſatisfaction. Who then that is wiſe would neglect to ſecure to himſelf ſuch exquiſite advantages? If in matters of a temporal concern we freely brand with

* Nullum tempus vacare officio poteſt.

the mark of Folly thoſe, who by neglect of proper opportunities, or through indolence and inattention forfeit advantages, which would render their worldly circumſtances eaſy and comfortable; how much rather ſhould we fix that ſtigma upon thoſe, who, by a wretched abuſe of the preſent ſhort ſeaſon of life, forfeit an eternity of conſummate happineſs? And can we conceive, that ſuch an happineſs is to be obtained without any attention or labour on our parts? that it will be laviſhed upon us, however we neglect or deſpiſe it? What example have we of a ſimilar kind to encourage us in ſuch an idea? What do we ſee or know of earthly things, deſirable and great, which are thus obtained? St. Paul well obſerves, that "Every one who ſtriveth for an earthly crown, for a corruptible reward, is temperate in all things;" in all things fulfilling the duties required, and improving every moment of the Time aſſigned for his preparation to the conteſt. How much rather then ought we, muſt we thus ſtrenuouſly apply ourſelves to the duties enjoined, and do all we can to huſband well this "ſhort

and precarious" ſeaſon of trial, if we wiſh to appear truly wiſe, and to gain the prize of eternal bleſſedneſs!

For wiſdom urgeth us no leſs ſtrenuouſly to the ſame conduct, from the "ſhortneſs and precarioufneſs" of this important period: which, were we certain of enjoying its utmoſt extent, is but a point compared to eternity: And yet of this point, we can never aſſure ourſelves, ſo many thouſand avenues are daily opened to the vaſt regions of immenſity! Who then would omit to improve the opportunity, by Almighty goodneſs put into his power, and to live to day as one that knows he may be ſummoned on the morrow to an immortal life!

Only conſider, my young friends, what manner of perſons we ſhould each of us become, if we were informed by truth infallible, that within the ſpace of "twenty days" we muſt give up Time, and enter on Eternity! Could we do other than ſeriouſly, and with all our power, apply ourſelves to the duties

which would recommend to the happiness
that eternity!—" Now as we are all creat
to be eternal, to live in an endless succes
of ages upon ages, where thousands and mil
lions of thousands of years, will have n
proportion to our everlasting life with God
so with regard to this eternal state, which
is our real state, " twenty days" is as poo
a pittance as " twenty years." And wh
can presume to promise himself twenty years
How wise then to live, as thus comparing
Time with Eternity! For since an eternal
state is as certainly ours as our present state,
it is plain that we cannot judge rightly o
any particular Time as to us, but by com-
paring it with that eternal duration, for
which we are created. If you would know
what five years signify to a being which
is to exist an hundred, you must compare
five to an hundred, and see what proportion
it bears: So if you would know what twenty
years signify to a son of Adam, you must
compare it, not to a million of ages, but to
an eternal duration, to which no number of
millions bears any proportion; and then you

will judge right by finding it *nothing*, a mere drop in the great ocean of eternity! Upon the footing then of this ſtate of the caſe, conſider only how you would condemn the "Folly" of a man, who ſhould loſe his ſhare of future glory, for the ſake of being rich or great, or praiſed or delighted in any enjoyment, only one poor day before he was to die!—But if the period will come, when a number of years will ſeem leſs to every one of us, than a day does now; what a condemnation muſt it then be, if eternal happineſs ſhall appear to be loſt, for ſomething leſs than the enjoyment of a day!

"Why does a Day ſeem a trifle to us now? It is becauſe we have Years to ſet againſt it. It is the duration of years which makes it appear as nothing. What a trifle then muſt the years of a man's age appear, when we are obliged to ſet them againſt Eternity? when there ſhall be nothing but Eternity wherewith to compare them! This will be the alarming caſe of each one of us, as ſoon as we depart from this temporary ſcene. We

ſhall be forced to forget the diſtinctions of days and years, and to meaſure Time, not by the courſe of the ſun, but by ſetting it againſt an endleſs duration! As the fixed ſtars, on account of our being placed at ſuch a diſtance from them, however large in themſelves, appear but as ſo many points to us; So when we, placed in eternity, ſhall look back upon all Time, it will appear but as a moment, a very point of exiſtence*!" Alarming reflections! Will they not be ſufficient to convince us, my young friends, how poorly they think, how falſely they eſtimate, how unwiſely they act, who are leſs careful of an eternal ſtate, becauſe they may be at ſome diſtance from it, than they would be, if they knew they were within a few weeks or days of it? And yet who of us can aſſure himſelf, that he is even within ſo long a ſpace as a few days of it? In a few hours perhaps the dire arreſt may come: On this moment depends eternity! Wilt thou then, O man, be guilty of ſo glaring a folly, as to abuſe

* See Law's Serious Call.

or neglect this moment, this ſeaſon, this harveſt of thy hopes? *Go to the Ant, thou* inſenſible, *conſider her ways, and be* WISE.

It would be eaſy to ſhew the wiſdom of a due improvement of Time, from a variety of other conſiderations: we might urge beſides "its ſhortneſs and precarioufneſs," the many unavoidable and neceſſary interruptions, to which a right improvement of it is ſubject; the large portion of it conſtantly devoted to the ſervices of animal nature, to the preſervation of our body in life and health: and we might urge from thence the obligations we are under to conſult for our ſuperior part, for our ſoul's health and vigour, to which ſurely we ought to dedicate all the Time we can improve, from the demands of animal and inferior nature. But I paſs by theſe conſiderations: juſt briefly to recommend the wiſdom of rightly improving your Time, from a motive more eſpecially intereſting to You, my young friends. The period of improvement is ſhort; it is that only which you happily have in your power. For we cannot

chuſe the Time of life wherein to avail ourſelves of our natural endowments, and to reap all the advantages deſigned us in them. In youth, our bodies eaſily receive whatever mien or motion: where is the ſound ſo difficult which our tongues cannot be then taught to expreſs? But if we are advanced to manhood, before theſe qualifications are attained, how fruitleſs, or at leaſt how difficult will be the endeavour to attain them? —Exactly ſimilar is the caſe with our underſtanding, our will, and our paſſions. There is a ſeaſon,—the important ſeaſon now in your poſſeſſion,—when a plenteous harveſt of uſeful truths may be gathered; when our paſſions will readily ſubmit to the government of reaſon; when right principles may be ſo fixed in us, as to influence every important action of our future lives *. But this ſeaſon, this ſeed-time of our hopes, extends neither to the whole, nor to any conſiderable length of our continuance upon earth: It is limited to a few years of our term; and if through-

* See vol. i. p. 12.

out theſe we neglect it, error and ignorance, vice and miſery, according to the uſual courſe of things, are entailed upon us: our will becomes our law; our luſts gain a ſtrength which we ſhall afterwards vainly oppoſe; wrong inclinations become ſo confirmed in us, that they defeat all our endeavours to correct them.

How wiſe then, my young friends, to ſeize this precious opportunity, and to lay up a ſtore of future happineſs and peace! For this will be found not only your "Duty" and your "Wiſdom," but your higheſt "Happineſs." It is with a view to that happineſs, with a view to your "real Pleaſure" more eſpecially, that I wiſh to recommend the proper employment of your Time.—It is a ſelf-evident maxim, that the better we are, the happier we muſt be: Angels are happier than we, becauſe they are holier: God is perfect happineſs becauſe he is perfect goodneſs. Now the more diligently we diſcharge the duties of our ſtation, the better we are: but this diſcharge of duty conſtitutes the right improvement of Time:

by plain conſequence therefore the more carefully we improve our Time, the more we increaſe our happineſs. Conſcience bears a chearful teſtimony to the propriety of our conduct, and proclaims a jubilee to the ſelf-approving mind: Serenity ſmooths our brow, and ſmiling ſatisfaction conducts us joyfully along the road of life. Every moment pleaſingly occupied preſents ſome uſeful proſpect to our view: no painful laſſitude, no irkſome wearineſs, no tedious melancholy broods over the ſlow and heavy-dragging hours; nor are we urged to frivolous diſſipation, or to vicious engagements, to "murder" that Time, which hangs heavy on the hands of the poor being, whoſe utmoſt ſpan below is threeſcore years and ten, but who after this ſhort courſe is run, hath to live an immortal ſpirit, from eternity to eternity *!

That Life, that eternal life, ſo formidable to the diſſipated and vicious, affords a freſh

* There cannot ſurely be a greater inconſiſtence, than to lament the ſhortneſs of life, while we complain of the length, and tediouſneſs of Time. "Fulfil but your duties; live for eternity; and you will never find time irkſome, or think life too ſhort."

ſource of moſt abundant happineſs to the wiſe improver of the preſent tranſitory ſcene: Here he beholds the full, the ample rewards of all his preſent pains, and patient perſeverance: high above the obſtructing and oppoſing difficulties of a ſinful world, he looks to that celeſtial region, where trial ſhall ceaſe, though fruition never ſhall;—the fruition of God, and of the pleaſures prepared for thoſe who love him. Animated by this exalted hope, he is ſollicitous to redeem, to buy up, to improve every moment of this ſhort and paſſing period; thinks nothing of real value in it, but what tends to the important deſign for which it is given him,—the glory of God, and the ſalvation of his ſoul: and in this view, he conſiders good or evil with an almoſt equal indifference; his heart, though truly thankful for the one, being never improperly attached to it; and for the other, he is able to ſay with full triumph, in the words of the ſacred writer, *Our light afflictions, which are but for a moment, work out for us an eternal and exceeding weight of glory!*

Such is the "Happineſs" both in preſent poſſeſſion, and in future proſpect, which a right improvement of your Time will certainly impart. Need I then, my young friends, exhort you to this duty? which is no leſs bound upon you by motives of your own Intereſt and Pleaſure, both in this world and the next, than by motives of higheſt Obligation to the ſovereign Giver of all your Time. I enter not into the particular methods by which you are to improve this precious talent. I enlarge not on the temporal advantages ariſing from ſuch improvement; theſe will come more properly under the next diſcourſe, when we ſpeak of INDUSTRY: Suffer me however to offer two or three general rules, which may prove uſeful to direct your conduct.

"Take care then, Firſt, that you employ your Time, and that you employ it innocently." To be idle and unemployed, is a ſign not only of a weak head, but of a bad heart. And as it is one vile abuſe of Time, which is given us for action, and action of the utmoſt moment, ſo is it one ſure method

to lead us to other and worſe abuſes. For he who is idle and wholly unoccupied, will ere long without queſtion be occupied in miſchief. You muſt therefore take care, that you "Employ" your Time; but then you muſt take as much care to employ it "Innocently:" and by innocent employment is meant all the proper duties of your ſtation, and all thoſe inoffenſive and ſhort relaxations, which are neceſſary either to the health of your bodies, or to the enlivening and invigorating your minds.

We live in an age, when words are ſtrangely perverted and abuſed, as well as things; and when the ſofteſt terms, as we have heretofore remarked *, are often given to actions, which deſerve other appellations, and which, through thoſe terms, lull and deceive the ſoul into deſtruction. Thus we call by the name of "innocent amuſements" all thoſe diſſipating publick and private pleaſures, which reign ſo prevalent, which increaſe ſo

* See vol. ii. p. 43 and 141.

faſt, and the love whereof may juſtly be termed The Characteriſtic of our age. If we are created only for diſſipation and pleaſure, this infatuating circle of delights may be trod with ſecurity, and called innocent with propriety: If we are really candidates for an Eternal ſtate, it will be difficult, I fear, to ſhow the innocence of that love and attachment to diverſions, which takes up the life, the time, the thoughts of thoſe engaged in them; and which abſolutely precludes from every right and honourable uſe of thoſe talents which God hath committed to our truſt. You, my young friends, deſirous of improving your Time, will never term, can never think ſuch diſſipations innocent: But while you find ſome degree of relaxation neceſſary, and inoffenſive and ſocial amuſements in a high degree uſeful, will be careful not to offend in the exceſs even of theſe: remembring that duty, not diſſipation, is the great end of a Chriſtian's exiſtence; and that of all characters the moſt inſignificant is that "of a lover of pleaſure more than a lover of God."

But obſerve we ſecondly, That it is not enough that we "Employ" our Time, and employ it "Innocently:" We muſt be careful to "Improve" it as much as we can, and to redeem it from all that improper waſte, and thoſe unneceſſary conſumptions, in which men are apt to be too laviſh of it. There are five things in which a terrible waſte of time is too commonly made: In Sleep, in Meals, in Dreſs, (each abſolutely neceſſary, yet each, alas! how much abuſed by us) in idle and impertinent Viſits and uſeleſs Converſation when in company, and in vain and romantic thinking when alone. If a man were ſeriouſly to ſit down,—even thoſe amongſt us, my beloved, who have not been addicted to any heinous vices—and to conſider how the greateſt part of his Time has ſtolen away, it would at once ſhock and ſurprize him! The portion would be found very ſmall, which he could be ſaid to have lived: and how much ſmaller ſtill the portion employed in proper uſes, and dedicated to His glory, who is the Lord of our life, and the giver of all our Time!

Would you, therefore, my young friends, be able to give a better account to your Almighty maſter, you muſt huſband with ſtricteſt œconomy the moments now happily in your power, and cut off as much as you may from thoſe unreaſonable and extravagant expences of Time. Nature is certainly contented with a moderate portion of Sleep; and as it is the loweſt of all animal enjoyments, the dignity of that nature ſhould arouſe you on the one hand to a conqueſt over it; as, on the other, ſhould the unſpeakable advantages which you will derive from early application in the morning to duty and to buſineſs. Health will be as well or better preſerved, if we do not ſit long and luxurioufly at our Meals: A very little Time will ſerve to apparel us with decency and propriety: and we may divert ourſelves, enjoy our friends, and perform all the neceſſary civilities which our ſituation in life requires, without making it an employment. And for thoſe whoſe occupations call them to labour, they may well cut off all needleſs expences and waſte of Time, by induſtry and application in their

ſeveral profeſſions. Then a chearful moment of honeſt Relaxation, and a much more chearful moment of ſincere Devotion, will cauſe all their Time to paſs off light and eaſy.

But thirdly, My young friends, you muſt be careful not only to employ your Time, and to employ it innocently; not only to cut off and retrench all ſuperfluous waſte of it; But "all that Time, which you gain by retrenching, you muſt ſtudy to improve, by employing it to the beſt and nobleſt purpoſes *."

* Mr. Addiſon, ſpeaking of the Time ſpent in religious exerciſes, ſays, "The man who lives under an habitual ſenſe of the divine preſence, keeps up an habitual chearfulneſs of temper, and enjoys every moment the ſatisfaction of thinking himſelf in company with his deareſt and beſt of friends. The Time never lies heavy upon him; it is impoſſible for him to be alone. His thoughts and paſſions are the moſt buſied at ſuch hours, when thoſe of other men are moſt unactive. He no ſooner ſteps out of the world, but his heart burns with devotion, ſwells with hope, and triumphs in the conſciouſneſs of that preſence which every where ſurrounds him; or on the contrary, pours out its fears, its ſorrows, its apprehenſions to the great ſupporter of its exiſtence." Spectator, No. 93.

This is the principal point you are to aim at, if you would effectually improve your Time; you muſt be anxious to employ it in the beſt and nobleſt uſes, in ſubſerviency to your own eternal welfare; that is, with a conſtant eye to the glory of God, and the good of mankind: for herein conſiſts our duty; and for this end was all our Time given us *. And let me recommend that in the management of this great depoſit, in the practice of theſe rules, and in your right employment of your Time, you be careful to proportion that Time wiſely, and according to the weight and importance of the work or buſineſs in which you engage: allotting ſuch a part of it for this buſineſs, and ſuch a part for that, ſo as not only to leave no intervals for unlawful or unneceſſary acti-

* Biſhop Beveridge's reſolution (and let it be obſerved, thoſe reſolutions were formed, when he was about twenty years of age) reſpecting Time, is as follows: "I am reſolved by God's grace, to redeem my Time paſt, in uſing a double diligence for the future:—to employ and improve all my gifts and endowments, both of body and mind, to the glory and ſervice of my great Creator." See his Private Thoughts.

ons to intrude themſelves, but to have every hour aſſigned to its due employment. How great advantages, how great comforts ariſe from ſuch a regular and exact diſtribution of Time, I could ſpeak, my young friends, from my own experience, with the fulleſt aſſurance and ſatisfaction.

Thus then, if you would act agreeably to Duty, to Wiſdom, to Happineſs, you muſt huſband the preſent ſeaſon; you muſt improve the preſent ſhort and precarious period allotted for your future and eternal proviſion. You have that ſeaſon now: but you have only the preſent Now. Mortals exiſt for the preſent; the paſt is gone and dead; 'tis "with the years beyond the flood:" the future is not come, is uncertain; it may never come. The preſent only, but the preſent always is in our power. Yet, ſtrange contradiction!—mortals rarely, if ever, live for the preſent: All human life is ſpent either in retroſpection on the paſt, or in concern and preparation for the future *. This is the height of folly.

* See M. Paſcal's Thoughts on Religion.

On the contrary it is true wiſdom, and leads to true happineſs, to live for the preſent, that is, to improve the Time we have in hand, for that is ours; to employ it to the beſt uſes, and to work out our ſalvation *To day, while it is called to day, leſt the night come wherein no man can work.*

Be this then your care, my dear young friends, who yet, through the mercy of God, are in the bloom and flower of life, and have the ſtrength and perfection of your Time before you. This, this is the important ſeaſon, wherein to perform acceptable duty. Provide then for yourſelves an unexhauſtible ſtore of comfort; offer to God the ſervices of your youth: ſo ſhall you enjoy in the winter of age the felicities of a peaceful mind, and an approving God; real, ſubſtantial, all-ſufficient "Pleaſures." Nay, and if found ripe for glory, before you are ripe in years,—for God meaſures not life by length of days, but by the fulneſs of thoſe days in virtuous and holy deeds—if early found ripe for glory, and cut down in the

bloſſom of your age; thus prepared your change ſhall be bleſſed, eternity and gladneſs ſhall crown and reward you. And, fully to convince yourſelves of the vanity and miſery of Time ſpent in worldly pleaſures and purſuits, in doing evil, or in doing nothing, Only, in concluſion take with Me, a brief view of ſome of your fellow-creatures thus occupied around you!

See that ſordid ſon of Avarice, who "riſes up early, late takes reſt, and eats the bread of carefulneſs!" he it muſt be owned is diligent enough in huſbanding his Time. But for what end is all this diligence, all this ſollicitude?—It is to gain an increaſe to his earthly ſtores; it is to add ſomething more to an heap, already too large for his enjoyment, and which will ſink his ſoul deep into endleſs perdition. But this ſo much engroſſes all his Time, his thoughts, his heart, that God, and Heaven, and his immortal ſoul can be ſpared none of either, or at beſt, but little; and that (as he ſpares to every thing)

very grudgingly: all is loſt, this groveling earth-worm thinks,—all which is not given to gain.

See again, yon eager ſon of Pleaſure: he is fearful leſt the moments ſhould eſcape: he has much to do; "Time is precious, he will tell you; he muſt haſte away, he cannot be detained at all; he could not ſtay to perform any benevolent office, any religious duty, not if it were to ſave his ſoul." And why all this anxiety, all this haſte?—an appointment of pleaſure; a meeting of gaiety or luxury; wine or women ſollicit his attendance; and thus miſerably he employs all that Time, which was given him for the great purpoſe of ſecuring his ſoul's ſalvation.

Equally ſollicitous, though devoted to another ſervice, this man's whole Time and thought are engroſſed by the Ambitious purſuit of worldly pomp and ſplendor. Here he conceives all happineſs to centre: and

continually ſearching for that happineſs, while continually diſappointed in the ſearch, you will not wonder, that he can ſpare no leiſure, as he can find no ſatisfaction in a ſerious application to the important buſineſs, for which alone he was created!

Turn we our view from thoſe thus buſily occupied in wrong purſuits, to thoſe who have no purſuits at all; from thoſe who miſemploy their Time in doing evil, to thoſe who equally miſemploy it in doing nothing*! What liſtleſs wretched beings! In what a doze of

* The nature of theſe diſcourſes precludes a too particular enumeration of characters: however, juſt to ſpecify, what I cannot enlarge upon, I ſubjoin a paſſage from Dean Bolton's "Employment of Time," which may lead to a clearer idea of my meaning. He ſuppoſes that, in a viſion, a Gymnoſophiſt examines the men in our country how they had paſs'd their morning; "Many of them acknowledged, that the morning, properly ſpeaking, had been near gone before their eyes were opened: Many of them had only riſen to dreſs, to viſit, to amuſe themſelves at the drawing-room or coffee-houſe. Some had by riding or walking been conſulting that health at the beginning of the day, which the cloſe of it would wholly paſs in impairing. Some, from the

indolent ſtupidity paſs their yawning uſeleſs days! mere burthens as they are to their

Time they had got on their own cloaths, had been engaged in ſeeing others put on theirs; in attending levees, in endeavouring to procure by their importunity, what they had diſqualified themſelves for, by their idleneſs. Some had been early out of their beds, but it was becauſe they could not, from their ill luck the preceding evening, reſt in them; and when riſen, as they had no ſpirits, they could not reconcile themſelves to any ſort of application. Some had not had it in their power to do what was of much conſequence: in the former part of the morning, they wanted to ſpeak with their tradeſmen, and in the latter, they could not be deny'd to their friends. Others, truly, had been reading; but reading what could neither make them wiſer or better; what was not worth their remembring, or what they ſhould wiſh to forget. Several appeared with an air, expreſſing the fulleſt confidence, that what they had to ſay for themſelves, would be to the Philoſopher's entire ſatisfaction. They had been employed, as virtuoſi ſhould be; —had been exerciſing their ſkill in the liberal arts, and encouraging the artiſts. Medals, pictures, ſtatues, had undergone their examination, and been their purchaſe. They had been enquiring what the literati of France, Germany, Italy, had of late publiſhed; and they had bought what ſuited their reſpective taſtes. When it appeared, That the compleating a Roman ſeries, had been his concern, who had never read over in his own language a Latin hiſtorian. That they who grudged no expence for originals, knew them

mother earth; living merely to conſume her fruits, to eat, to drink, to ſleep, to trifle! Some of them you may obſerve vapouriſh and uneaſy, diſſatisfied and melancholy; complaining, that they know not "how to kill the tedious hours of this ſhort life:" and applying for whole days, with an induſtry, which well-directed would almoſt canonize them for ſaints,—to the paltrieſt diverſions, the meaneſt and the moſt irrational! ſuch as are attended with the worſt conſequences in many caſes, and lead to bad conſequences in all. And this, all this merely "becauſe they know not how to diſpoſe of their Time;" that is, becauſe they do not know, that every moment they live, they are to live for eternity!

only by hearſay from their worſt copies: That the book-buyers had not laid out their money on what they ever propoſed to read, but on what they had heard commended; and what they wanted to fit a ſhelf, and fill a library, which only ſerved them for a breakfaſt room.—The ſage pronounced this claſs of men, the idleſt of all idle people; and doubly blameable, as waſting alike their Time and their fortune." See p. 59, &c.

Look only at examples like theſe, and the miſery, the folly, the impropriety of abuſing your Time, will appear in the moſt glaring light; and will lead you, my young friends, I truſt, to a better application of the ſeaſon before you. A true concern for religion will ſoon teach and direct you to ſuch an employment of yourſelves, as will render Time by no means burthenſome: You will never complain of its length; its ſhortneſs only will ſtrike and alarm you: and the proper uſe of Time will of itſelf tend more and more to convince you, that man was not born merely to fill up a little ſpace in this tranſitory earth; to indulge his bodily paſſions, to live and to die, like the beaſts which periſh.——No; he was born to co-operate in the great work of his ſalvation, with that Redeemer, who died on the croſs to procure the means of grace, and to ſet the hope of glory before the ſinful ſons of men. That glory eternal depends upon the right improvement of the preſent Time. If we wiſh to enjoy that glory, we muſt uſe this Time as becomes rational and ſhort-

lived beings. If we diſregard that glory, we may then live in the diſregard of all things beſide. You, I perſuade myſelf, have better ſentiments, for you have better hopes. God of his grace inſpire you with true wiſdom, and enable you to improve the preſent Time, that you may enjoy all the bleſſings and the glories of that which is to come!

Anecdotes to enforce the employment of Time.

(1.) "We all of us complain of the ſhortneſs of Time," ſays Seneca, "and yet have much more than we know what to do with. Our lives are either ſpent in doing nothing at all, or in doing nothing to the purpoſe, or in doing nothing that we ought to do. We are always complaining that our days are few; and acting as though there would be no end of them." In ſhort, that noble philoſopher has deſcribed our inconſiſtency with ourſelves in this particular, by all thoſe various turns of expreſſion and thought, which are peculiar to his writings.

(2.) The alluſion of human life to trees, leaves, &c. is familiar with the moſt celebrated poets. Homer's famous ſpeech of Glaucus, Iliad, b. vi. ver. 181. is too generally known to need a recital; and the ſame thought may be found in Eccleſiaſticus, c. xiv. ver. 18. almoſt word for word. That fine fragment however of Simonides,

extant in Stobæus, is ſo very ſtrikingly adapted to the preſent ſubject, that we cannot withold it from the reader; and contains ſuch beautiful inſtruction, as we would wiſh to leave upon his mind.

" Wiſe was the Chian, when he ſaid, to
ſhew
The inſtability of men below;
" Ah! what a wondrous likeneſs may we trace
Between the falling trees, and mortal race!"
Yet, yet, how few the ſolemn truth receive!
Vain in purſuit, and high in hope they live:
A thouſand fruitleſs ſchemes their thoughts
engage,
Alike forgetful or of death or age:
Toiling, while health and ſtrength their
powers ſupply,
With buſy, reſtleſs, fond anxiety!
Ah fools and vain! and will they not be wiſe,
Nor know that youth's fair flow'r ſoon fades
and dies,
And life's quick moment like a ſhuttle flies!
But thou, my friend, a better leſſon learn,
And, hence inſtructed, mind thy great
concern:

To virtue's generous acts thy ſoul apply,
In good more active,—as ſo ſoon to die!"

(3.) It was a memorable practice of Veſpaſian the Roman emperor, throughout the courſe of his whole life. He called himſelf to an account every night for the actions of the paſt day; and as often as he found he had ſlipped any one day without doing ſome good, he entered upon his diary this memorandum, "Diem perdidi;" "I have loſt a day." The above fine inſtance is thus noticed by our great moral poet, in the Night Thoughts.

"On all-important Time, through every age,
Though much, and warm, the wiſe have urg'd, The man
Is yet unborn who duly weighs an hour.
"I've loſt a day"—the prince who nobly cry'd,
Had been an emperor without his crown;
Of Rome!—Say rather, lord of human race.
He ſpoke, as if deputed by mankind.
So ſhould all ſpeak: So reaſon ſpeaks in all.—

Where is that thrift, that avarice of TIME,
(O glorious avarice!) Thought of death inſpires,
As rumour'd robberies endear our gold?
O Time! than gold more ſacred! more a load
Than lead, to fools! and fools reputed wiſe!
What moment's granted man, without account!
What years are ſquander'd, wiſdom's debt unpaid!—
Time, in advance, behind him hides his wings,
And ſeems to creep, decrepit with his age;
Behold him, when paſt by; what then is ſeen,
But his broad pinions ſwifter than the winds?
And all mankind in contradiction ſtrong,
Rueful, aghaſt! cry out on his career."

Night II.

(4.) Alfred the Great was one of the wiſeſt, the beſt and moſt beneficent monarchs that ever ſwayed the ſceptre of this realm; and his example is highly memorable.—"Every hour of his life had its peculiar

buſineſs aſſigned it. He divided the day and night into three portions of eight hours each; and though much afflicted with a very painful diſorder, aſſigned only eight hours to ſleep, meals, and exerciſe; devoting the remaining ſixteen, one half to reading, writing, and prayer, and the other to publick buſineſs:" So ſenſible was this great man that Time was not a triſle to be diſſipated, but a rich talent entruſted to him, and for which he was accountable to the great Diſpenſer of it. And ſurely, if a perſon like Him, in the higheſt ſtation of life, amidſt all the temptations of eaſe, and affluence, and pleaſure, was thus careful to huſband Time, and fill up the fleeting moments of life with ſome uſeful employ, how very inexcuſable muſt it be in thoſe, who have not ſuch allurements, to murder their days, by indolence and diſſipation! "An idle body," ſays Mr. Addiſon, "is a monſter in the creation; all nature is buſy about him." How wretched is it to hear people complain, that the day hangs heavy upon them! That they don't know what to do with themſelves! How monſtrous

are ſuch expreſſions among creatures who can apply themſelves to the duties of religion and meditation; to the reading of uſeful books; who may exerciſe themſelves in the noble purſuits of knowledge and virtue, and every hour of their lives make themſelves wiſer and better than they were before.

(5.) We are told of Queen Elizabeth, That except when engaged by publick or domeſtick affairs, and the exerciſes neceſſary for the preſervation of her health and ſpirits, ſhe was always employed in either reading or writing; in tranſlating from other authors, or in compoſitions of her own; and that notwithſtanding ſhe ſpent much of her Time in reading the beſt writings of her own and former ages, yet ſhe by no means neglected that beſt of books, the Bible: for proof of which, take her own words. "I walk," ſays ſhe, "many times in the pleaſant fields of the Holy Scriptures, where I plucke up the goodliſome herbes of ſentences by pruneing; eat them by reading; digeſt them by muſing, and laie them up at length in the

hie ſeate of memory, by gathering them together; that ſo having taſted their ſweetneſs, I may the leſs perceive the bitterneſs of life." See her MSS. in the Bodleian Library, No. 235.

(6.) When Socrates, in Plato's Phædo, has proved the immortality of the ſoul, he conſiders it as a neceſſary conſequence of the belief thereof, "That we ſhould be employed in the culture of our minds; in ſuch care of them as ſhall not only regard that term, to which we give the name of Life, but alſo the whole which follows it; in making ourſelves as wiſe and good as may be; ſince on it our ſafety entirely depends; the ſoul carrying hence nothing with it, but its good or bad actions, its virtues or vices; and theſe conſtitute its happineſs or miſery to all eternity." How might many a Chriſtian redden, to think that this is the language of a Pagan mind; a mind unenlightened with the bright ſplendors of goſpel truth, and equally ignorant of a Saviour's merits, and of a Saviour's example!

(7.) Seneca, in his letters to Lucilius, aſſures him that there was not a day in which he did not either write ſomething, or read and epitomiſe ſome good author: and Pliny in like manner, giving an account of the various methods he uſed, to fill up every vacancy of Time, after ſeveral employments which he enumerates, obſerves, "Sometimes I hunt; but even then, I carry with me a pocket-book, That whilſt my ſervants are buſied in diſpoſing the nets and other matters, I may be employed in ſomething that may be uſeful to me in my ſtudies; and that, if I miſs my game, I may at leaſt bring home ſome of my thoughts with me, and not have the mortification of having caught nothing."

(8.) An Italian philoſopher expreſſed in his motto, that "Time was his eſtate:" An eſtate indeed! which will produce nothing without cultivation; but will always abundantly repay the labours of induſtry, and ſatisfy the moſt extenſive deſires, if no part of it be ſuffered to lie waſte by negligence, to be over-run with noxious plants, or laid out

for ſhew, rather than for uſe. "The duties of man, as Dr. Johnſon finely obſerves, are ſuch as human nature does not willingly perform, and ſuch, as thoſe are inclined to delay, who yet intend ſometime to fulfil them. It was therefore neceſſary that this univerſal reluctance ſhould be counteracted, and the drowſineſs of heſitation wakened into reſolve. That the danger of procraſtination ſhould be always in view, and the fallacies of ſecurity be hourly detected. To this end all the appearances of nature uniformly conſpire. Whatever we ſee on every ſide reminds us of the lapſe of Time and the flux of life. The day and night ſucceed each other; the rotation of ſeaſons diverſifies the year; the ſun riſes, attains the meridian, declines and ſets, and the moon every night changes its form. The Day has been conſidered as an image of the Year, and the year as the repreſentation of Life. The Morning anſwers to the Spring, and the Spring to Childhood and youth; the Noon correſponds to the Summer, and the Summer to the ſtrength of Manhood. The Evening is an emblem of Autumn, and

Autumn of declining life. The Night, with its ſilence and darkneſs, ſhews the Winter, in which all the powers of vegetation are benumbed; and the Winter points out the time when life ſhall ceaſe, with all its hopes and pleaſures. If theſe parts of time were not variouſly coloured, we ſhould never diſcern their departure or ſucceſſion; but ſhould live thoughtleſs of the paſt, and careleſs of the future; without will, and perhaps without power to compute the periods of life, or to compare the time which is already loſt, with that which may probably remain. And yet it is certain that theſe admonitions of nature, however forcible, however importunate, are too often vain; and that many who mark with ſuch accuracy the courſe of Time, appear to have little ſenſibility of the decline of Life. Every man has ſomething to do, which he neglects; every man has faults to conquer, which he delays to combat. But,—let him who propoſes his own happineſs reflect, that while he forms his purpoſe, the Day rolls on, "and the Night cometh, when no man can work."

(9) Auguſtus Cæſar, a few moments before his death, aſked his friends who ſtood by him, if they thought he had acted his part well; and upon receiving ſuch an anſwer as was due to his merit, "Let me then," ſaid he, "go off the ſtage with your applauſe;" uſing the expreſſion with which the Roman actors made their exit, at the concluſion of a dramatic piece. Mr. Addiſon's remark on this incident is worthy of himſelf: "I could wiſh," ſays he, "that men, while they are in health, would conſider well the nature of the part they are engaged in; and what figure it will make in the minds of thoſe they leave behind them: whether it was worth coming into the world for; whether it be ſuitable to a reaſonable being: In ſhort, whether it appears graceful in this life, or will turn to an advantage in the next?—This kind of ſcrutiny would give them a true ſtate of themſelves, and incline them to conſider ſeriouſly what they are about. One day would rectify the omiſſions of another, and make a man weigh all thoſe indifferent actions, which

though they are eaſily forgotten, muſt certainly be accounted for." Spectator, No. 317.

(10.) Plato ſomewhere adviſes his friend Archytas to conſider, "That we are not born for ourſelves alone; that our country, our parents, and our friends, have their reſpective claims upon us." The following ſtory is not inapplicable. "Among the Indians, ſays Apuleius, there is an excellent ſet of men, called Gymnoſophiſts: Theſe I greatly admire; though not as ſkilled in propagating the vine, or in the arts of grafting or agriculture. They apply not themſelves to till the ground, to ſearch after gold, to break the horſe, to tame the bull, to ſhear or feed ſheep or goats.—What is it then that engages them?—One thing, preferable to all theſe. Wiſdom is the purſuit as well of the old men, the teachers, as of the young their diſciples. Nor is there any thing among them that I ſo much praiſe, as their averſion to ſloth and idleneſs. When the tables are overſpread, before the meat is ſet on them,

all the youths aſſembling to their meal are aſked by their maſters, In what uſeful taſk they have been employed from ſun-riſing to that time? One repreſents himſelf as having been an arbitrator, and ſucceeded by his prudent management in compoſing a difference; in making them friends, who were at variance. A ſecond had been paying obedience to his parents' commands. A third had made ſome diſcovery by his own application, or learned ſomething by another's inſtruction. The reſt give an account of themſelves in the ſame way.—He who has done nothing to deſerve a dinner, is turned out of doors without one, and obliged to work, while the others enjoy the fruits of their application."

(11.) Epictetus has a fine chapter to inculcate the improvement of our Time and talents. "Remember," ſays he, "that the world is a theatre, and that your part in this drama of life is determined by THE POET *. Upon Him it muſt depend, whether you ſhall

* Ποιητης, the great *Maker* and *Framer* of all things.

act a long or ſhort one; whether your character ſhall be high or low. If therefore, he aſſign you that of a beggar, take care to fill it well; if a cripple, or a prince, or a private obſcure man, or whatever it be, make the beſt of it. For conſider, that the acting of the part aſſigned you commendably depends upon yourſelf; this is your buſineſs; but the giving out of the parts, and chooſing the actors, is not yours, but another's province."

(12.) How different is the view of paſt life, in the man who is grown old in knowledge and wiſdom, from that of him who is grown old in ignorance and folly? The latter is like the owner of a barren country, that fills his eye with the proſpect of naked hills and plains, which produce nothing either profitable or ornamental. The other beholds a beautiful and ſpacious landſcape, divided into beautiful gardens, green meadows, fruitful fields; and can ſcarce caſt his eye on a ſingle ſpot of his poſſeſſions, that is not covered with ſome beautiful plant or flower. See Spectator, No. 94.

(13.) One comfort of age, ſays Sir William Temple, may be, That whereas young men are uſually in pain, when they are not in pleaſure, old men find a ſort of pleaſure, whenever they are out of pain: And, as young men often loſe or impair their preſent enjoyments, by raving after what is to come, by vain hopes or fruitleſs fears; ſo old men relieve the wants of their age, by pleaſing reflections upon what is paſt. Therefore, men in the health and vigour of their age, ſhould endeavour to fill their lives with reading, with travel, with the beſt converſation, and the worthieſt actions, either in their public or private ſtations, that they may have ſomething agreeable left to feed on when they are old, by pleaſing remembrances." See his Eſſay on Health and long Life. Works, vol. iii. p. 300.

(14.) Procraſtination, or delay, is well defined, "The thief of Time;" it not only ſteals us from duty, but from ourſelves. To-morrow, may the procraſtinator ſay,—To-morrow is ſtill the fatal Time when all is to be done,

or to be rectified: To-morrow comes, it goes, and ſtill I pleaſe myſelf with the ſhadow, whilſt I loſe the reality: unmindful that the preſent Time alone is ours; the future is yet unborn, and the paſt is dead; and can only live,—as parents in their children,—in the actions it has produced. The Time we live ought not to be computed by the Number of years, but by the Uſe which has been made of them. 'Tis not the extent of the ground, but the yearly rent, that gives value to the eſtate.

(15.) We will conclude theſe anecdotes, with recommending to our readers (in the excellent words of the Guardian) this ſhort ſelf-examination, "What have ye been doing?" And if every one of them ſeriouſly lays his hand upon his heart, and conſiders what he is doing, it will check him in all the idle, or, what is worſe, the vicious moments of life; will lift up his mind, when it is running on in a ſeries of indifferent actions; and encourage him in thoſe which are virtuous and laudable. In a word, it

will very much alleviate that guilt, which the beſt of men have reaſon to acknowledge, in their daily confeſſions; of "leaving undone thoſe things which they ought to have done, and of doing thoſe things which they ought not to have done."

SERMON XVII.

PART II.

On the INDUSTRIOUS Employment of TIME.

PROVERBS vi. 6, 8.

Go to the Ant, thou ſluggard, conſider her ways, and be wiſe: which, having no guide, overſeer, or ruler, provideth her meat in the ſummer, and gathereth her food in the harveſt.

"IT is not enough, we have obſerved, to employ our Time, we muſt employ it well;" we cannot employ it well, unleſs we give to INDUSTRY the hours which we mean to improve for our preſent and eternal welfare. Here too again the little "Ant" ſupplies us with an inſtructive leſſon: for ſhe not only huſbands, with provident wiſdom, the ſhort ſeaſon allotted for gathering her

future ſupply; but, with unwearied Induſtry and attention, applies every moment of that ſeaſon to the buſineſs for which it is given. But not the Ant alone; all "Nature," my young friends, loudly preaches this virtue to you; which has beſides the awful ſanction of "Revelation" to enforce its practice; together with the cleareſt dictates of "Reaſon," of preſent and of future happineſs.

Perhaps it may ſeem ſome objection to this poſition, that labour and toil were enjoined upon our firſt father, as the puniſhment of his diſobedience, and as part of his curſe. But let me aſk, can we conceive, that if Adam had never tranſgreſſed, he would have paſſed a life of indolence and inactivity, without any application or exerciſe of his mental or bodily powers? Short as is the hiſtory of his perfect ſtate, it gives us no room for any ſuch imagination; but on the contrary informs us, that the *Lord God put the man*, whom he had form'd, *into the garden*

of Eden, to DRESS and to KEEP it *; which certainly, at the leaſt, implies, that he was not to be void of ſome occupation and employment: nay, and the reaſon given, why the Lord cauſed the earth at firſt to produce ſpontaneouſly plant and herb, is, that there was *not yet a man to* TILL *the ground* †. That ground, moſt probably, in its primæval ſtate, would have anſwered freely and luxuriantly to the tiller's care: Free from thoſe noxious thorns and weeds which require ſo much attention to eradicate, its cultivation would have been eaſy and pleaſant, and its produce certain; nor would there have been occaſion for all that painful tillage, thoſe conſtant fatigues of the laborious huſbandman, ſo neceſſary now to obtain its precious bounties. But to ſuppoſe that man in Paradiſe and perfection, would have had no buſineſs for his hands, no call to diligence and activity, is no leſs abſurd, than it ſeems contrary to all our ideas of human nature and this ſublunary

* See Gen. ii. 15. † Gen. ii. 5.

world. Indeed we have no conception, we can have no conception of total inactivity in rational beings, of any, even of the moſt exalted kind. Accordingly we find the ſovereign Father himſelf, as well as his bleſſed Son, engaged in a variety of works of Creation, of Providence, of Redemption. *My Father worketh hitherto*, ſaith Chriſt, *and I work* *. And the eternal Spirit is repreſented in the ſacred records to us, as unceaſingly operating in the great buſineſs of human ſalvation, illuminating and ſanctifying the ſouls of men.

If from the Deity we deſcend to the higheſt order of celeſtial beings, to Angels; we find them too deſcribed as the moſt active meſſengers and miniſters of their God, continually employed in performing the important mandates of their Almighty King, ſervants of his, and doing his pleaſure; for which they are peculiarly calculated, as ex-

* John v. 17.

celling in ſtrength; ſwift as the winds, bright and executive as a flame of fire *.

Nor are we to conceive, when we drop this cumbrous load of fleſh, and the corporeal calls to induſtry ceaſe, that in that future and bleſſed ſtate which we hope to inherit, inactivity ſhall take place, and a vacancy from all employments enſue. We are told of the Bleſſed in Heaven, that they REST *not day and night*, praiſing God, and celebrating his glory †. Now though, amidſt our preſent dark and confined apprehenſions, we can form but very incomplete and imperfect ideas of the future world; yet from the very nature of rational exiſtence we certainly may draw ſome probable concluſions: And, well aſſured of the negative felicities of that world, which we are informed will be wholly exempt from the diſtreſsful evils of mortality, from ſin, from ſorrow, from pain, and from death; which will no more oppreſs us with the im-

* See Heb. i. 7. Pſal. xviii. 10.

† Revel. iv. 8.

portunate demands of hunger, thirſt, or ſleep, thoſe mighty invaders of our preſent Time, and thought, and pains; We may remain ſatisfied, that its poſitive bleſſings will be ſufficient to fill up the powers of our ſouls, and to afford continual and delightful occupations, equal to the enlargement and activity of our faculties.

But if God, if Angels, if beatified Saints, unite to inculcate the neceſſity, and conſequently the happineſs of employment and Induſtry; you will find the great leſſon, my young friends, no leſs forcibly impreſſed, from the conſideration of your own nature, and of the world around you. Man cannot even exiſt, much leſs exiſt in health and ſafety, and ſtill much leſs in convenience and elegance, without the exertions of Induſtry. Providence hath ſo formed us, that as diligence and exerciſe are indiſpenſibly requiſite to the improvement of our minds, and the health of our bodies; ſo nothing can be attained for the advantage of the one or the other, without that exerciſe and diligence. Leave

the mind uncultivated; apply no pains or attention to its information and inſtruction; ſuffer the body to reſt in torpid indolence, and inactive ſloth; and the latter will not be more miſerable and diſeaſed, than the former will be ſtupid, vicious, and unhappy: and both will repreſent a foul and ſtagnating lake, whoſe putrefying waters, uſeleſs to every end of life, produce only noxious and poiſonous vermin. On the contrary, like the clear river,—which refines as it flows, gladdening and fertilizing every land through which it glides,—is that man, who with diligence and induſtry fills up the duties of his ſtation; accumulating to himſelf the beſt advantages, while of the utmoſt ſervice to ſociety in general. And as that ſociety could not ſubſiſt without activity and induſtry, and as we all are ſo much intereſted not only in its ſubſiſtence, but in its regular and proper ſubſiſtence; it follows that our call to induſtry and activity in our proper ſphere, is no leſs loud, no leſs important, than our call to ſupport ourſelves in being, and in all

the bleſſings which we derive from commerce and communication with our fellow-mortals.

But not our own Nature, which owes its growth, its improvement, its health, its pleaſures, and its comforts to diligence and induſtry; not Society, which owes to them its being, its continuance, its advantages; Not theſe alone enjoin the duty. *Go to the Ant, thou ſluggard*; Go to the Animal world, and read there in plaineſt characters, the reproof of thoſe, who dare diſclaim the dictates of their nature, *hide their hands in their boſom, and refuſe to labour!* Let the birds of the air, and the beaſts of the field inſtruct thee: Active for their own preſervation and welfare, they are diligent to provide their food, and to exert their beſt talents in defence of themſelves and their young. Nor can any degree of blameable or prejudicial indolence, be charged to any one ſpecies of the brutal kind.—I had forgot: For the reproof of the ſlothful and lazy, Providence

hath created one animal *, the very opprobrium of the race; to hold forth, as in a glaſs, the deteſtable ſcorn of a vice, which brings to miſery and diſtreſs, and *ſhall clothe a man with rags* †.

From the divine, the angelic, the rational, the animal nature, I might proceed to the inanimate world; and ſhew, how by a conſtant recurrence of agency and activity the whole round of material creation is carried on and ſupported. "The heavenly bodies are ever moving with conſtancy and punctuality, to perform their ſeveral courſes; and are hereby, at leaſt, of ſervice to us, whether they anſwer any higher, farther purpoſe or not. The elements compoſing this ſublunary world are likewiſe in the ſame uſeful motion; ſupporting each other by a

* It is the American SLOTH or Sluggard I mean; the very emblem of the vice whoſe name it bears: and concerning which I omit to ſay more, as I have given a long account of it in the Chriſtian's Magazine; vol. i. p. 114, to which I refer my reader.

† Proverbs xxiii. 21.

circulation of active offices and tranſmutations. The ſtagnation of ſome would prove the deſtruction of all, at leaſt as to their uſe, though not exiſtence. And though theſe all act involuntarily, by an external force impreſſed upon them, which they cannot reſiſt; yet they fulfil hereby the will of their creator, and manifeſt it to others: and the argument drawn from ſuch analogy is not weak or inconſiderable. It ſhews that it was the general deſign of Providence, that the welfare of the univerſe ſhould be carried on by action and employment, and that every part of it ſhould bear teſtimony againſt ſloth and idleneſs. Nay, indeed, the very creation of that univerſe is the fulleſt teſtimony againſt them. A wiſe and intelligent Author muſt propoſe ſome end in the production of things: but this end, whatever it was, could never be promoted by indolence and ſloth. Non-activity is the next degree to non exiſtence; and could no more anſwer any uſeful purpoſe. A production of ſtupid, unmoving, paſſive beings, could be no other than a general chaos; which could prove of no farther uti-

lity, than as affording matter for future motion, harmony and order *."

Thus "all Nature" through all her works loudly proclaims the neceſſity and the advantage of activity and diligence. And perfectly conſonant to the inſtruction of this great volume of the Creator's works, are the dictates of that other BOOK, ſtamped with the infallible ſignature of his divine authority. It would be endleſs to quote particular paſſages: I need only refer you to the book of Proverbs; and I do with ſingular pleaſure refer you to it, as conſcious of the many advantages which will follow from an attentive peruſal of that moſt inſtructive book; where you will find uſeful admonitions on every topic of wiſdom, and many on that of Induſtry, in particular: a virtue of whoſe utility and importance the royal writer ſeems eſpecially to have been convinced, and conſequently, in the higheſt degree ſollicitous to enforce its practice. Nor can any

* See Dodwell's Diſcourſes.

thing be conceived more forcible and pointed, than a variety of the images and expreſſions which he employs to decry and ridicule the oppoſite vice. Take one example, as a ſpecimen of the reſt: "I went by the field of the SLOTHFUL, and by the vineyard of the man void of underſtanding: and lo, it was all grown over with thorns, and nettles had covered the face thereof, and the ſtone wall thereof was broken down. Then I ſaw and conſidered it well: I looked upon it, and received inſtruction. Yet a little ſleep, a little ſlumber, a little folding of the hands to ſleep. So ſhall thy poverty come as one that travelleth, and thy want as an armed man *."

In perfect conformity herewith a much greater than Solomon, both by his precepts and example, diſcourages the ſlothful and uſeleſs, the idle and unprofitable; thoſe who improve not their talents, nor keep their lamps trimmed and burning; while he marks out emphatically the advantages of

* Prov. xxiv. 30.

Diligence and application, by declaring, that *unto him who hath* (and improveth what he hath) *ſhall be given, and he ſhall have more abundance: while from him that hath not, ſhall be taken away, even that which he ſeemeth to have* *. And to give the ſtrongeſt authority to his precepts, his whole life was one ſcene of action and induſtry: *He went about doing good.* Unwearied in the bleſſed office, he denied himſelf even the neceſſary refreſhments of nature, that he might adminiſter to the ſpiritual and temporal neceſſities of mankind, and fulfil the great duties of his important miſſion. *My meat*, ſaid he, *is to do the will of him who ſent me, and to finiſh his work* †. And as he was thus, in the ſolemn buſineſs of his adminiſtration, a pattern of induſtry to all his followers; ſo it has been thought by ſome, that he choſe to be born of laborious parents, and to occupy himſelf for the major part of his life in the honeſt

* See Matt. xiii. 12, and the Parables of the Talents, the Ten Virgins, the unprofitable Servant, &c.

† John iv. 34.

duties of their calling, not only to give mankind a ſtriking example of humility, but of diligence and application to the proper duties of their ſphere.

His immediate diſciples and followers trod cloſely in the ſteps of his bright example. Indeed the buſineſs in which they were engaged called for the utmoſt exertion of their powers; nor was the goſpel to be propagated without unfainting labour, perſeverance and activity: Hence the exhortations ran, that they *who laboured in the word and doctrine, ſhould be counted worthy of double honour.* And one of the moſt illuſtrious of thoſe labourers, whoſe own unparalleled Induſtry gave him abundant authority to enforce the virtue, as in a variety of other places, ſo in the following, ſtrongly exhorts to its practice: *Yourſelves know,* ſaith he, *how ye ought to follow us: for we behaved not ourſelves diſorderly among you, neither did we eat any man's bread for nought, but wrought with labour and travel night and day, that we might not be chargeable to any of you: not becauſe we have not power,*

but to make ourſelves an enſample to you to follow us. For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, THAT IF *any* MAN WOULD NOT WORK, NEITHER SHOULD HE EAT. *For we hear that there are ſom who walk among you diſorderly, working not at all, but are buſy bodies. Now them who are ſuch, we command and exhort by our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, that with quietneſs they work, and eat their own bread* *. Can any words more forcibly inculcate the neceſſity of honeſt and laborious induſtry upon Chriſtians? Can any words more forcibly and clearly reprove the abſurdity and wickedneſs of thoſe, who under pretence of Chriſtianity, devote their lives to ſloth and idleneſs; to the dream of uſeleſs contemplation, and the droniſh inactivity of a cloiſter?—And once more, let me aſk, can any words be imagined leſs like thoſe of a cheat and impoſtor, than this ſolemn appeal of our apoſtle to his own laborious and diſintereſted conduct;—his purpoſe to ſhew himſelf an example of a virtue, ſo beneficial to the true intereſt of man?

* Theſſ. iii. 7, &c.

For not "Nature" and "Revelation" only, "Reaſon" too, eſpecially, as directing us to purſue our preſent and future good, in its ſtrongeſt force obliges to the induſtrious employment of our Time and our talents.

Yes, my young friends, would you enjoy either happineſs of mind or body, would you live comfortably in this world, or wiſh to enjoy the eternal glories of the next; you muſt fly from the baſe enervating indulgences of ſloth and indolence, and give yourſelves up to the ceaſeleſs, ſelf-rewarding toils of honeſt induſtry. Think not this any hardſhip, any difficulty propoſed to you: think not, with the giddy and inconſiderate, application a burthen, and diligence a ſecluſion from pleaſure: Yet, were it ſo, is not the attainment of everlaſting peace and reſt well worthy all the pains which we can beſtow in this ſhort period of life?—for what are twenty, what are threeſcore Years, when compared to an Eternity *!—This however,

* See p. 175, &c. foregoing.

is ſo far from being the truth, that LABOUR itſelf becomes the higheſt pleaſure* to the virtuous mind, eſpecially as it beſtows the moſt valuable gratifications. It is in this view eſpecially, that I would recommend the practice to you: And conſider a moment, what bleſſing, what ſatisfaction is there, which Time or eternity beſtows, attainable without Induſtry? Health, honour, riches, wiſdom, chearfulneſs, ſelf-enjoyment, approbation of conſcience and approbation of God, are the noble train which always accompany this diſtinguiſhed virtue; not to ſpeak of the ſecurity from a number of ſpiritual and temporal evils, which they ſhare, who live beneath the ſhelter of its banners.

HEALTH, that prime bleſſing of the human life, is not to be poſſeſs'd, or if poſſeſs'd will ſoon be forfeited, without induſtry and exerciſe: They ſtring the nerves, improve the conſtitution, prevent diſeaſes, give ſtrength and rigour: they create an appetite for enjoy-

* "Labor ipſe Voluptas," ſays the poet.

ment, as well as enjoyment for the appetite; and qualify for much higher taſtes of pleaſure, than the ſlothful indulgence of the Senſualiſt and Epicure can ever attain. And what the wiſe man obſerves, with regard to the refreſhment of that reſt, which is earned by toil and buſineſs, holds good of every bodily enjoyment: *The ſleep of a labouring man is ſweet, whether he eat little or much* *.

HONOUR too is the natural conſequence of Induſtry: *Seeſt thou a man diligent in his buſineſs?* ſays Solomon, *he ſhall ſtand before kings, he ſhall not ſtand before mean men* †. For diligence creates eſteem and confidence: it ſoon attracts the obſervation, and conſequently the regard of mankind. Every one, for their own ſake, will chuſe to be concerned with a perſon of that character in every office of life. And as this inclination depends not on the generoſity, but the intereſt of mankind, it will certainly and invariably prove highly beneficial to the induſtri-

* Eccleſ. v. 12. † Prov. xxii. 29.

ous man. The king of Iſrael's motive for the advancement of Jeroboam, is founded in reaſon and nature; and therefore will ever more or leſs prevail. *Solomon, ſeeing the young man,* THAT HE WAS INDUSTRIOUS, *he made him ruler over all the charge of the houſe of Joſeph* *.

With Health and Honour come RICHES to the diligent: *The hand of the diligent maketh rich; but the ſoul of the ſluggard deſireth, and hath nothing.* Induſtry enables a man to be uſeful to himſelf, and frequently to be ſerviceable to thoſe in diſtreſs: places him above all reaſonable apprehenſions of want, and qualifies him to aſſiſt others. It raiſes a fortune frequently, and a maintenance almoſt always, with credit and ſucceſs; by real uſe, and therefore with true ſatisfaction. On this account the delight of enjoying the fruit of one's own induſtry, is ſo often and ſo emphatically ſpoken of in the old Teſtament, *Thou ſhalt eat the labour of thine hands: Oh*

* 1 Kings xi. 28.

well art thou, and happy ſhalt thou be *! And ſurely there is a ſingular complacency in the conſciouſneſs of owing to our own diligence, under Providence, the bleſſings we enjoy; eſpecially in having promoted ſome buſineſs of public ſervice, as well as of private advantage. The glory is natural and laudable, and gives a reliſh to the plaineſt as well as the moſt ſumptuous fare.

But WISDOM more invaluable than rubies, with whom are *riches and honour, and whoſe fruit is better than gold*, this excellent Wiſdom too is utterly unattainable without Induſtry: for the mind like the body requires exerciſe to its growth and health; and if deprived of that exerciſe, will ſtagnate in ignorance, or grow foul with the poiſonous productions of vice: while Induſtry not only enlarges our mental faculties, and improves our actual knowledge, but creates, as it were, a new capacity for higher improvements †.

* Pſalm cxxviii. 2.

† See Dodwell on Induſtry; to whoſe excellent diſcourſe I have been much obliged in the latter part of this ſermon. See

It carries us ſtill farther and farther in the pleaſing purſuits of Wiſdom, and inſpires a perpetual wiſh and ardour to know more, the more we become acquainted with her beauty and excellence.

Can it be wondered, my young friends, that CHEARFULNESS and SELF-ENJOYMENT are the natural and certain conſequences of ſo well-directed, ſo advantageous a virtue? The body in health, the character in reſpect, the circumſtances eaſy, the mind enlarged,—with what complacence and approbation will the conſcience give her teſtimony; and how muſt the whole man rejoice in the review of the propriety of his conduct, and conſequently in the approbation of his God! that God, who as we have obſerved, throughout his works, teaches the great duty of Induſtry, and with peculiar force impreſſeth it in the ſacred volume of revealed truth; and who, in characters equally legible, hath ſtamped his awful ſanction on its practice, by making it, as it

alſo the Chriſtian's Magazine, vol. I. p. 302, and Delaney's Sermons on the ſocial duties; Sermon 17.

were, the neceſſary vehicle of every good to man! while Indolence and Sloth, thoſe worſt defects of the mind, not only ſap the foundation of every virtue, and give a tincture of their nature to every action; but deprive of all the comforts of Time, and all the glories of futurity. Indeed, the natural and unavoidable conſequence of Idleneſs is not mere loſs of comfort, but certain acquiſition of evil and miſery. It expoſes to the whole train of vices and miſchiefs, to the force of each ſeparate allurement, and to the united ſtrength of all bad diſpoſitions. It is itſelf a ſtate of temptation; for our nature is ſo little calculated for mere inactivity, that he who has no proper employment, will of courſe be wandering after that which is improper; and if doing nothing, will aſſuredly be led to doing ill. So that in this reſpect alſo, as a preſervative from ſpiritual and temporal evils, great is the praiſe, and ineſtimable are the advantages of Induſtry.

Youth too is the ſeaſon when habits of Induſtry are not only moſt eaſily acquired,

but when we are in every reſpect beſt qualified for its exertions. It is the ſeaſon for action and diligence, which by cuſtom will become delightful, and render Sloth as hateful as it is deſpicable: which will make the preſent period pleaſing, and make the latter part of life chearful and honourable: bleſſings utterly unattainable, if this ſeaſon, this irrecoverable period is neglected and abuſed! A habit of ſloth contracted in early years, cuts off the very diſpoſition to this virtue *.

* This habit is the more carefully to be avoided, as there ſeems in human nature a ſtrange propenſity to it. "There is," ſays a complainer of idleneſs in the Spectator, "ſcarce any one perſon without ſome allay of it: and thouſands, beſides myſelf, ſpend more Time in an idle uncertainty, which to begin firſt of two affairs, than would have been ſufficient to end them both. The occaſion of this ſeems to be the want of ſome neceſſary employment to put the ſpirits in motion, and awaken them out of their lethargy. If I had leſs leiſure, I ſhould have more: for I ſhould then find my Time diſtinguiſhed into portions, ſome for buſineſs, others for the indulging of pleaſures: But now one face of indolence over-ſpreads the whole, and I have no land-mark to direct myſelf by. Were one's Time a little ſtraitened by buſineſs, like water incloſed in its banks, it would have ſome determined courſe: but unleſs it be put into ſome channel, it has no current, but becomes a deluge, without uſe or motion." See No. 316.

and if Providence awakens men, or neceſſity drives them, to make the attempt, their endeavours are and muſt be made with much greater difficulty, and much leſs perfection.

Improve therefore to your own great happineſs this important period of your life, by habituating yourſelves, my young friends, to Diligence and Induſtry. Conſider your Time and your talents, as great depoſits, intruſted to your care by the ſovereign Lord of all things, and as depoſits of whoſe improvement he expects you to give a good account; not for His ſake, nor for His advantage, but for your own ſakes, and for your own advantage: that having much, the liberal Benefactor may amply reward your fidelity and application, by giving you more, even an abundance of his ſuperlative bleſſings. Nor think any place or rank in life, any ſuperiority of wealth or ſtation, an exemption from payment of the univerſal demand of Induſtry. It is the demand of Nature, it is the demand of Society, it is the demand of Reaſon and of God: and He acts in palpable contrariety to

all theſe, who lives a life of idleneſs and inutility, a burthen to himſelf, and a nuiſance to others. For not the poor Hind only, who is compelled to labour for his daily bread; not the children of neceſſity, who, thrown unſupported upon the lap of earth, are urg'd to continual induſtry, for the maintenance of themſelves and families: not theſe only, but every child of man is bound to cultivate this virtue, if he means to enjoy a ſound mind in a ſound body; to do his duty to ſociety and himſelf; to improve the faculties which God has given him, and to implant in his ſoul thoſe divine graces, which ſhall grow and flouriſh to perfection in eternity.

If therefore, my young friends, Providence, in its bounty, has happily given you an exemption from ſervile toil and more laborious purſuits, Shew your gratitude, by a more diligent and painful improvement of your mental powers. Think it your duty, and as ſuch make it your buſineſs, to contribute by your growing virtue and wiſdom to the felicity of your fellow creatures. Induſtriouſly

and diligently occupy yourſelves in ſearching for and communicating Good and happineſs, as extenſively as you may: and be well aſſured, that in proportion as you thus employ yourſelves, and improve your minds, you will advance your own happineſs alſo, and partake of the trueſt pleaſures which human nature can ſhare or impart. Which, &c.

Anecdotes reſpecting Industry.

(1.) The Court of the Areopagites was the moſt honourable in the city of Athens. In this ſolemn audience it was moſt diligently inquired, What manner of life each Athenian led; what kind of income or revenue he enjoyed; and by what means it was that he maintained himſelf and family. They were taught to follow ſome honeſt courſe of life, as knowing they were to give a publick account thereof: and if any man was convicted of idleneſs, or a reproachful way of life, he had a brand of infamy fixed upon him, or elſe was driven out of the city, as an unprofitable and pernicious member. By

this exemplary procedure they put ſloth and indolence out of countenance, and filled their commonwealth with examples of every kind of Induſtry, without fear of incurring the danger of a public accuſation. Had we theſe Areopagites among us, (ſays one) how many idle fellows, who now live by plunder, by ſharping young gentlemen at play, or by ſetting and drawing in apprentices to rob their maſters, would be obliged to lay by the Sword they have impudently aſſumed, together with the title of Gentlemen; and return to the honeſt Trades, to which they were brought up, or at leaſt be ſome other way made uſeful to the publick! In ſhort, what an alteration ſhould we find for the better, did we follow the wiſdom of theſe ancients, in enacting and enforcing laws againſt idleneſs; which ſhould make every man give an account of his Time, and be anſwerable for his way of life.

(2.) A modern Poet has finely pointed out in the following lines, that Idleneſs, whether public or private, is not only unnatural and

impolitick, but the fertile ſource of evil, both to individuals and the common wealth:

" Nature lives by TOIL;
Beaſt, bird, air, fire, the Heavens and rolling world,
All live by action: Nothing lies at reſt,
But Death and Ruin. Man is born to care;
Faſhion'd, improv'd by labour. This of old
Wiſe ſtates obſerving, gave that happy law,
Which doom'd the rich and needy, every rank
To manual occupation; and oft call'd
Their chieftains from the ſpade, or furrowing plow,
Or bleating ſheepfold. Hence Utility
Through all conditions; hence the joys of health:
Hence ſtrength of arm, and clear judicious thought;
Hence corn, and wine, and oil, and all in life
Delectable. What ſimple Nature yields,
(And Nature does her part) are only rude
Materials, cumbrous on the thorny ground:
"Tis TOIL that makes them Wealth."

(3.) It is not to effeminate Prayers (ſays Cato) that the Gods grant their aſſiſtance: They have their ears open to the induſtrious man, who begs their aſſiſtance at the ſame

Time that he employs his own Endeavours. They hate idleneſs; and the prayers of the ſlothful are more likely to draw down their indignation, than their aid *. Labour and Induſtry are the price which they have ſet upon the bleſſings of this world, and thoſe who will enjoy them may purchaſe them at that rate.—Cicero adds, that our Make alone will inform us, that we are not placed in the world for our diverſion, to follow our pleaſures only, and ſit as idle ſpectators. No life, therefore, can be pleaſing to God, but that which is alſo uſeful to mankind.

(4.) There are ſome, ſays Mr. Johnſon, who poſſeſs idleneſs in its full dignity; who call themſelves "the Idle," as Buſiris in the play calls himſelf "the Proud;" who boaſt that they do nothing, and thank their ſtars they have nothing to do; who ſleep every night till they can ſleep no longer; and riſe only that exerciſe may enable them to ſleep again: who prolong the reign of darkneſs

* See Æſop's Fable of Hercules and the Carter, Fable 56, of Croxall's edition.

by double curtains, and never ſee the ſun, but to "tell him how they hate his beams*." Whoſe whole labour is to vary the poſtures of indulgence; and whoſe day differs from their night, but as a couch or chair differs from a bed. Theſe are the true and open votaries of idleneſs, for whom ſhe weaves the garland of poppies, and into whoſe cup ſhe pours the waters of oblivion: who exiſt in a ſtate of unruffled ſtupidity, forgetting and forgotten; who have long ceaſed to live, and at whoſe death the ſurvivors can only ſay, "That they have ceaſed to breathe." Idler, No. 31.

(5.) At Athens there were two poor young men, Menedemus and Aſclepiades, who were greatly addicted to the ſtudy of philoſophy. They had no viſible means of ſupport, yet kept up their plight and colour, looked hale, well, and in good condition. The Judges† had information given them of the retired life of theſe two, and of their neither having any

* Paradiſe Loſt, b. iv. l. 37. † See Anecdote the 1ſt.

thing to live on, nor apparently doing any thing to maintain themſelves: conſequently, as they could not live without ſuſtenance, it was inferred they muſt have ſome clandeſtine means of ſubſiſting. Upon this ground of information the young men were ſummoned before the Judges, and ordered to anſwer to the charge. One of the accuſed, after ſaying that little credit was given to what a man could urge in his own defence, (it being natural to believe that every criminal will either deny or extenuate the crimes he is charged with) and adding, that the teſtimony of a diſintereſted perſon was not liable to ſuſpicion; deſired that a certain baker, whom he named, might be ſummoned, and anſwer for them. Accordingly the baker being come, declared that the young men under examination took it by turns to grind his corn every night; and that for the night's work he every morning paid the young man who ground at the hand mill a drachma, that is, about a groat. The Judges, ſurprized at their abſtinence and induſtry, ordered, as a

reward of their virtue, that 200 drachmas ſhould be paid them out of the public money.

(6.) We have heretofore obſerved, that when the Roman hiſtorians deſcribe an extraordinary man, it always enters into his character as an eſſential, That he was "incredibili induſtriâ,"—"diligentiâ ſingulari;" of incredible induſtry, of ſingular diligence: And Cato, in Salluſt, tells the ſenate, That it was not the Arms ſo much as the Induſtry of their anceſtors, which advanced the grandeur of Rome. So that the founders and regulators of this ſtate, in making diligence and labour neceſſary qualifications of a citizen, took the ſame courſe as the poet mentions Jupiter to have thought of, when he ſucceeded to the government over the primitive mortals.

——— Pater ipſe colendi
Haud facilem eſſe viam voluit, primuſque per artem
Movit agros, curis acuens mortalia corda;
Nec torpere gravi paſſus ſua regna veterno.*

* Virgil. Georgic. i. l. 121, &c.

This account of the providential utility of ſome ſeeming evils, is not only beautifully poetical, but ſtrictly philoſophical. Want is the origin of arts: infirmities and weakneſſes are the cauſe and cement of human ſociety. If man were perfect and ſelf-ſufficient, all the efforts of induſtry would be uſeleſs. A dead calm would reign over all the ſpecies. But hence, as the author of the Eſſay on Man obſerves,

Wants, frailties, paſſions, cloſer ſtill ally
The common int'reſt, and endear the tie:—
God, in the nature of each being founds
Its proper bliſs, and ſets its proper bounds:
But as he fram'd a whole, the whole to bleſs,
On mutual wants built mutual happineſs.

(7.) That famous diſturber and ſcourge of mankind, Charles the XIIth of Sweden, uſed to ſay, "That by reſolution and perſeverance, a man might do every thing:" Now though we may not entirely agree with his Majeſty, ſo far at leaſt we may venture to obſerve, That every man may, by unremitting application and endeavours, do much

more than at the firſt ſetting out, he thought it poſſible that he ever could do. Virgil ſays, "Poſſunt, quia poſſe videntur; they can conquer, who believe they can:" It behoves us much to diſtinguiſh between Difficulties and Impoſſibilities, which many people do not. The ſilly and the ſanguine look upon impoſſibilities to be only difficulties; as on the other hand, the lazy and the timorous take every difficulty for an impoſſibility. "A greater knowledge of the world, as a celebrated genius obſerves, will teach young men the proper medium between theſe two extremes."

(8.) Thoſe who have ſearched into human nature remark, That nothing ſo much ſhews the nobleneſs of the ſoul, as that its felicity conſiſts in Action. I have heard (ſays the Spectator) of a gentleman, who was under cloſe confinement in the Baſtile ſeven years; during which time he amuſed himſelf in ſcattering a few ſmall pins about his chamber, gathering them up again, and placing them in different figures on the arm of a great

chair. He often told his friends afterwards, that unleſs he had found out this piece of exerciſe, he verily believed he ſhould have loſt his ſenſes.

(9.) Sir William Temple, in his Heads for an Eſſay on the different conditions of life and fortune, pleaſantly tells us, of "an old man near the Hague; who (ſays he) ſerved my houſe from his dairy, and grew ſo rich, that he gave it over; bought a houſe and furniſhed it at the Hague, reſolving to live at eaſe the reſt of his life: But at length, grew ſo weary of being idle, that he ſold it, and returned again to his dairy." See his Works, vol. iii. p. 516, 8vo. There are many ſimilar inſtances to this in more modern days *.

(10.) "Love labour, cried a philoſopher; if you do not want it for food, you may for phyſick." He is idle, that might be better employed. The idle man is more perplexed what to do, than the induſtrious in doing what he ought. Action keeps the ſoul in conſtant health, but idleneſs corrupts

* See the Papers on "Retirement" in the Viſitor, vol. i.

and ruſts the mind: For a man of great abilities may, by negligence and idleneſs, become ſo mean and deſpicable, as to be an incumbrance to ſociety, and a burthen to himſelf. "There are but very few, ſays Mr. Addiſon, who know how to be idle and innocent." By doing nothing, we learn not only to do ill, but to ſuffer it too; and he that follows recreations inſtead of his buſineſs, ſhall in a little Time have no buſineſs to follow.

(11.) Indolence is a ſtream which flows ſlowly on, but yet undermines the foundation of every virtue. It were as little hazard to be toſſed in a ſtorm, as to lie thus perpetually becalmed; nor is it to any purpoſe to have within one the ſeeds of a thouſand good qualities, if we want the vigour and reſolution neceſſary for the exerting them. That the neceſſity of labour ought to be regarded as a puniſhment, is a mean and ſordid notion, invented by the effeminate, the lazy, and the vicious. On the contrary, if God had prohibited labour, ſuch prohibition might juſtly

have been deemed a token of his diſpleaſure; ſince inaction is a kind of lethargy, equally pernicious to the mind and body. An effeminate Sybarite, we are told, thanked the Gods very heartily, that he had never ſeen the ſun riſe in his life. Can there be a more ſtriking emblem of a narrow and unenlightened mind?—of a wicked and unprofitable ſervant? Well and truly ſaid Solomon, in this view, that "The ſlothful man is brother to him that is a great waſter." Prov. c. xviii. ver. 9.

(12.) "Whenever," ſays the Guardian, "I am diſpoſed to treat of the irreligion of an idle life, it ſhall be under this head, *Pereunt et imputantur**;" which is an inſcription upon a ſun-dial, in one of the Inns of Court, and is with great propriety held forth to publick view, in ſuch a place, where, the inhabitants being in an everlaſting hurry of buſineſs or pleaſure, the Buſy may receive an innocent

* That is, "They paſs away, and are put to account." This inſcription is ſtill to be ſeen in the Temple.

admonition to keep their appointments, and the Idle not to keep theirs." Guardian, N°. 131.

(13.) Demoſthenes is an immortal inſtance of the nobleſt perſeverance—the only virtue that is crowned. He was extremely affected with the honours which he ſaw paid to the orator Calliſtratus, and ſtill more with the ſupreme power of eloquence over the minds of men; and not being able to reſiſt its charms, he gave himſelf wholly up to it; from henceforth renounced all other ſtudies and pleaſures; and during the continuance of Calliſtratus at Athens, he never quitted him, but made all the improvement he could from his precepts. The firſt eſſay of his eloquence was againſt his guardians, whom he obliged to refund a part of his fortune. Encouraged by this event, he ventured to ſpeak before the people, but with very ill ſucceſs. He had a weak voice, a thick way of ſpeaking, and a very ſhort breath; notwithſtanding which his periods were ſo long, that he was often obliged to ſtop in the midſt

of them for reſpiration. This occaſioned his being hiſſed by the whole audience. As he withdrew, hanging down his head, and in the utmoſt confuſion, Satyrus, one of the moſt excellent actors of thoſe times, who was his friend, met him; and having learnt from himſelf the cauſe of his being ſo much dejected, aſſured him, That the evil was not without remedy, and that his caſe was not ſo deſperate as he imagined. He deſired him to repeat ſome of the verſes of Sophocles and Euripides to him; which he did. Satyrus ſpoke them after him, and gave them ſuch graces, by the tone, geſture, and ſpirit with which he pronounced them, that Demoſthenes himſelf found them quite different from what they were in his own manner of ſpeaking. He perceived plainly what he wanted, and applied himſelf ſtrenuouſly to the acquiring of it. His efforts to correct his natural defect of utterance, and to perfect himſelf in pronunciation, ſeem almoſt incredible, and prove (as Cicero remarks) that an induſtrious perſeverance can ſurmount almoſt all things. He ſtammered to ſuch a degree

that he could not pronounce ſome letters; among others, that with which the name of "Rhetoric," the art he ſtudied, begins: He was alſo ſhort-breath'd, as abovementioned. Theſe obſtacles he overcame at length, by putting ſmall pebbles into his mouth, and pronouncing ſeveral verſes in that manner without interruption, and accompanied it with walking, or going up ſteep and difficult places; ſo that at laſt no letter made him heſitate, and his breath held out through the longeſt periods. He went alſo to the ſea ſide; and whilſt the waves were in the moſt violent agitation, he pronounced harangues, both to ſtrengthen his voice, and to accuſtom himſelf, by the confuſed noiſe of the waters, to the roar of the people, and the tumultuous cries of publick aſſemblies. Demoſthenes took no leſs care of his Action than of his Voice. He had a large looking-glaſs in his houſe, which ſerved to teach him geſture, and at which he uſed to declaim, before he ſpoke in publick. To correct a fault which he had contracted by an ill habit of ſhrugging up his ſhoulders, he practiſed ſtanding

upright in a very narrow pulpit, or roſtrum, over which hung an halberd, in ſuch a manner, that if in the heat of action that motion eſcaped him, the point of the weapon might ſerve at the ſame time to admoniſh and correct him. His application to ſtudy was no leſs ſurprizing. To be the more removed from noiſe, and leſs ſubject to diſtraction, he ſhut himſelf up in a ſmall room under ground, ſometimes for months together; and there it was, by the light of his lamp, that he compoſed thoſe admirable orations, which were ſaid by them who envied him, to "ſmell of the oil;" to imply that they were too elaborate. Demoſthenes heard them; and only told them in reply, "It is plain that yours did not coſt you ſo much trouble." He roſe conſtantly very early in the morning, and uſed to ſay, that he was ſorry when any workman was at his buſineſs before him *. We may

* Cui non ſunt auditæ Demoſthenis vigiliæ? Qui dolere ſe aiebat, ſi quando opificum ante Lucana vigilaſſet induſtria. Cic. Tuſc. Queſt. l. iv. n. 44.

further judge of his extraordinary efforts to acquire excellence of every kind, from the pains he took in copying Thucydides's Hiſtory eight times with his own hand, in order to render the ſtile of that great man familiar to him. And his labour was well beſtowed; for it was by theſe means that he carried the art of declaiming to the higheſt degree of perfection of which it was capable; whence it is plain he well knew its value and importance. When he was aſked three ſeveral times which quality he thought moſt neceſſary in an orator, he gave no other anſwer than "Pronunciation." Inſinuating thereby, that qualification to be the only one, of which the want could leaſt be concealed, and which was the moſt capable of concealing other defects; and that pronunciation alone could give conſiderable weight even to an indifferent orator; when without it, the moſt excellent could not hope for much ſucceſs. As to Demoſthenes, Cicero tells us, that his ſucceſs was ſo great, that all Greece came in crowds to Athens, to hear him ſpeak; and he

adds, that merit ſo great as his could not but have that effect *.

(14.) Varia Servilius, deſcended of a Prætorian family, was remarkable for nothing but ſloth and indolence, in which he grew old and odious; inſomuch that it was commonly ſaid, by ſuch as paſſed his houſe, "Hic Varia ſitus eſt:" Here lies Varia: ſpeaking of him, as of a perſon, not only dead, but buried to all intents and purpoſes of rational exiſtence.

(15.) It is ſaid of the elder Cato, That to inflame the minds of his fellow ſoldiers to the love of induſtry, labour, and virtue, he uſed to addreſs them in ſuch memorials as the following:

* Here we cannot but take notice of the effect of good example. Cicero, who thus generouſly extols the great orator of Greece, himſelf took ſimilar pains in youth, and with ſimilar ſucceſs, to acquire excellence, and command eſteem. We refer for proof of this particularly to Kennett's Eſſay on the Roman Education, p. 28. prefixed to his Roman Antiquities.

" Si cum labore quidpiam rectè geris,
Labor recedit, facta rectè permanent:
Quod si jocosè, nequiter quid egeris,
Abit voluptas; turpe factum permanet."

When what is good you execute with pain,
The pain's soon past, the good deeds still remain.
When slothfully or basely aught is done,
Those base deeds stay, when all the pleasure's gone.

Indeed all the ancient Romans were such haters of idleness, That whereas in their Theology, Agenotia, who was to stir up to action; Stimula, who was to impel men to diligence; and Strenua, who was to give them constancy and firmness, were all three received as Deities, and were worshipped in Temples within the city; they would not receive Quies, or Rest, as a Goddess in publick; but built a Temple for her in one of their high-ways, without the city walls. See Camerar. Opera. cent. i. c. 15.

(16.) Dionyſius the Elder, being aſked, if he was at leiſure, and had nothing of buſineſs to do; The Gods forbid, cried he, that ever it ſhould be ſo with me; for a bow, as they ſay, will break if it be over-bent; but the mind if it be over-ſlack." Plut. Mor.

(17.) When we obſerve the lives of thoſe whom an ample inheritance has let looſe to their own direction, what do we diſcover, that can excite our envy? Their Time ſeems not to paſs away with much applauſe from others, or ſatisfaction to themſelves. They are generally employed every morning in finding expedients to rid themſelves of the day; chace Pleaſure through all the places of public reſort; and are continually changing one amuſement for another, which a few months will make equally inſipid; or ſinking into languor and diſeaſe, for want of ſomething to actuate their bodies, or exhilarate their minds. Whoever has frequented thoſe places where idlers aſſemble to eſcape from ſolitude, knows that this, or worſe, is generally the ſtate of the wealthy; and from this ſtate it is no great hardſhip to be debarred. No

man can be happy in total idleneſs: he that ſhould be condemned to lie torpid and motionleſs, "would fly for recreation, (ſays Dr. South) to the mines and the gallies." And it is well when nature or fortune find employment for thoſe, who would not have known how to procure it for themſelves. See the Adventurer, N°. 111.

(18.) About 50 years ago, the ſmall territory of Cancar, known in the maritime charts under the name of Ponthiamas, was wholly uncultivated, and almoſt deſtitute of inhabitants. A Chineſe merchant, commander of a veſſel which he employed in commerce, frequented theſe coaſts. Being a man of that intelligent reflective genius, which ſo characteriſtically marks his nation, he could not without pain behold immenſe tracts of ground condemned to ſterility, though naturally more fertile than thoſe which formed the riches of his own country; he conſtructed therefore a plan for their improvement. With this view, having firſt of all hired a number of labourers, ſome Chineſe, others from the neighbouring nations, he with great addreſs inſinuated him-

ſelf into the favour of the moſt powerful princes, who for a certain ſubſidy, aſſigned him a guard for his protection. In the courſe of his voyage to Batavia and the Philippine iſlands, he borrowed from the Europeans their moſt uſeful diſcoveries and improvements, particularly the art of fortification and defence: with regard to internal police, he gave the preference to the Chineſe. The profits of his commerce ſoon enabled him to raiſe ramparts, ſink ditches, and provide artillery. Theſe preliminary precautions ſecured him a *coup de main*, and protected him from the enterprizes of the ſurrounding nations. He diſtributed the lands to his labourers, without the leaſt reſervation of any of thoſe duties or taxes, known by the names of ſervices, or fines of alienation; duties, which, by allowing no real propriety, become the moſt fatal ſcourge to agriculture, and ſuggeſt an idea, which revolts againſt the common ſenſe of every wiſe nation. He provided his coloniſts at the ſame time with all ſorts of inſtruments proper for the labour and improvement of their grounds. In forming a

labouring and commercial people, he thought that no laws ought to be enacted, but those which nature has eſtabliſhed for the human race in every climate: he made thoſe laws reſpected by obſerving them firſt himſelf, and exhibiting an example of ſimplicity, induſtry, frugality, humanity, and good faith. He formed therefore no ſyſtem of laws;—but he did more: he eſtabliſhed morals. His territories ſoon became the country of every induſtrious man who wiſhed to ſettle there. His port was open to all nations: the woods were cleared; the grounds judiciouſly laboured, and ſown with rice; canals cut from the rivers watered their fields; and plentiful harveſts, after ſupplying them with ſubſiſtence, furniſhed an object of extenſive commerce. The barbarians of the neighbourhood, amazed to ſee abundance ſo ſuddenly ſucceed to ſterility, flocked for ſubſiſtence to the magazine of Ponthiamas, whoſe dominions at this day, are conſidered as the moſt plentiful granary of that part of Aſia; the Malais, the Cochin-Chineſe, the Siameſe, whoſe countries are naturally ſo fertile, conſidering

this little territory, as the moſt certain reſource againſt famine.

(19.) While health and the flower and vigour of our age remain firm and intire, it behoves every thinking mind to lay them out to the beſt advantage; that ſo when the latter days take hold of us and deſpoil us of our ſtrength and abilities, we may have a ſtore moderately ſufficient to ſubſiſt upon, laid in, in the morning of our life. The Ant, a creature truly provident and laborious, has always been propoſed to us as an inſtance of induſtry: both Jew and Gentile illuſtrate their reaſonings on this head, by mentioning this little type of ſeaſonable diligence. Solomon (as we have ſeen) ſeems to be in indignation with the lazy part of his ſpecies, and inſtead of arguing much with them, ſays, *Go to the Ant, thou ſluggard!* Æſop has prettily elucidated the point, in his Fable of the Ant and Graſhopper; and Horace inſpired by his own good ſenſe, or perhaps having Solomon's addreſs, or that Fable in his eye,

ſays, elegantly;—"*Exemplum magni formica laboris*," &c. Sat. I. l. 33—38. Whoever therefore think fit to ſpend the prime of their life in uſeleſs diverſions and unprofitable amuſements, muſt not be ſurprized, if, thus contradicting the dictates of reaſon and of truth, they find themſelves in the hoary winter of age, in a ſtarving, unpitied, miſerable condition.

(20.) As the great King Artaxerxes was travelling through the wide realms of Perſia, a certain man, named Miſes, preſented him with a pomegranate of a wonderful bigneſs, which the king admiring, demanded out of what Paradiſe he had gotten it; he anſwered, that he had gathered it from his own garden, and cultivation. The king was exceedingly pleaſed with the preſent, and gracing him with royal gifts in return, ſwore by the Sun, "That the ſame man, with like diligence and care, might as well of a little city make a great one." Ælian. Var. Hiſt. l. i. c. 33.

(21.) A gentleman in Surry had a farm worth 200*l. per annum*, which he kept in his own hands; but running out every year, he was neceſſitated to ſell half of it to pay his debts, and lett the reſt to a farmer for one and twenty years. Before the term was expired, the farmer one day bringing his rent, aſked him if he would ſell his land. "Why, ſaid the gentleman, will you buy it?"—"Yes, if it pleaſe you," ſaid the Farmer: "How! returned he, that's ſtrange! Tell me how this comes to paſs, that I could not live upon twice as much, being my own; and You, upon the half, though you have paid rent for it, are able to buy it?—Oh, Sir, ſaid the farmer, but two words made the difference: You ſaid Go, and I ſaid Come.—"What's the meaning of that?" ſays the gentleman. "Why, Sir," replied the other, you lay in bed, or took your pleaſure, and ſent others about your buſineſs; and I roſe betimes, and ſaw my buſineſs done myſelf." See the Fable of the Lark and her young ones.

SERMON XVIII.

On the Honour, Profit, and Pleasure of RELIGION *.

PROVERBS iii. 13—18.

Happy is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding. For the merchandize of it is better than the merchandize of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold. She is more precious than rubies; and all the things thou canst desire, are not to be compared unto her. Length of days is in her right hand, and in her left hand riches and honour. Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace. She is a tree of life to them that lay hold upon her; and happy is every one that retaineth her.

WE boast of our Reason, and with justice we boast of it: 'tis a ray of

* I did intend to have given a Sermon on the advantages and blessings of Reputation; (see vol. i. p. 111.) but the volumes having already swelled beyond my intended compass, I omit the insertion of it, and refer my young readers to what I have said on the subject, in my Treatise for "the Consolation of the Afflicted." p. 244.

the Divinity; 'tis man's diſtinguiſhing prerogative. But the higher and more juſt our boaſt, the more blameable is our abuſe, and the more puniſhable our diſregard, of this Reaſon. It is given us, not only to direct us in the affairs of this life, but to adviſe us of our future and better concerns; and to ſuggeſt that attention to eternal things which their importance deſerves. Yet it is but too obvious to every one's notice—nay, the experience of the generality proves but too fully—how much the ſerious dictates of reaſon are deſpiſed, with reſpect to futurity: and how much, in utter contempt of its admonitions, the happineſs of the preſent world is preferred to the happineſs of the future one: I ſhould have ſaid, "The imaginary happineſs:" For it is an inconteſtible truth, to which Time and Wiſdom have fixed their invariable ſeal, that earthly enjoyments alone, of what ſort or what degree ſoever, are incapable of giving ſolid felicity: and that whoever runs the round of worldly pleaſures and purſuits, will find in the end a miſerable vacuity in his

mind; will find that "vanity and vexation" muſt be ſtamped upon them all.—This is not the ſuggeſtion of fancy, or the gloomy repreſentation of moroſeneſs and melancholy: nor will it follow, becauſe real and ſubſtantial bliſs is not, cannot be attained from the tranſitory things of this life, that therefore no real or ſubſtantial bliſs can be attained at all. What hath been offered in the preceding diſcourſes, as well as what remains to be urged, will, I truſt, ſufficiently prove the contrary. But let any one conſult the teſtimony and experience of all mankind, ſo far as it can be had, in all ages of the world; let him conſider the nature of the human ſoul, and the Creator's deſign in forming ſuch a race of beings as we are; let him conſider the dictates of impartial reaſon; and after this, let him liſten to the voice of God's Revelation; and it will appear to him clearer than the mid-day light, that "as man was never made for Time and Earth, ſo nothing merely temporal or earthly can make man truly happy."

Yet man may be happy: happy in a high degree in this life, fore-taſte of the complete happineſs which is reſerved for him hereafter. For as it is abſurd to ſuppoſe (alas! that our practice ſhould render the ſuppoſition leſs abſurd!) that God ſhould create an immortal, ſpiritual being, merely for the ends of temporal exiſtence, and whoſe chief good ſhould be placed in worldly and corporeal gratifications;—what need of an immortal ſoul for this? what need of faculties ſuperior to thoſe of the brute creation?—As this very ſuppoſition is abſurd; ſo is it no leſs abſurd to ſuppoſe, that a God of infinite love and unbounded goodneſs, ſhould create a race of beings like the human, to paſs away their wretched lives here in continual diſquietude and ceaſeleſs perplexity. It is abſurd to ſuppoſe that He hath given us faculties and ſenſes, and yet made the proper gratification of them unlawful and criminal: It is abſurd to ſuppoſe, that he hath made the condition of our exiſtence tormenting; that he deſigns to try us with temptations, which our nature cannot withſtand, and to make the price of

future bliſs, the abjuration and extinction of all preſent.

No; far different is the love of God to his creatures: all his diſpenſations towards them are mercy and truth: And they who repreſent him as ſevere to thoſe creatures, and enjoining talks hard and nearly impoſſible to be performed, greatly injure the amiable Author of all bounty, and calumniate that "divine Religion" which he hath inſtituted, and which is the certain introduction to "Pleaſantneſs and Peace." For it is an unqueſtionable truth, that to walk in the paths, which he hath enjoined, is to ſecure to ourſelves the moſt perfect felicity which our preſent ſtate will admit; and that our miſery and unhappineſs ariſe in proportion to our deviation from that "peaceful and pleaſant path."—An obſervation, my young friends, which muſt above all others recommend the Religion of Jeſus Chriſt to you, and make you anxious to eſtabliſh in your hearts, that kingdom of God *, which will

* See Luke xvii. 21.

procure you at once the higheſt "Honour," the greateſt "Advantage," the pureſt and moſt perfect "Pleaſure." It is in that view, and as the cloſe of all I have to offer for your inſtruction and emolument, that I would wiſh to enforce upon you the ſincere and diligent practice of genuine Chriſtianity.

The fine encomium paſſed upon WISDOM, by one of the wiſeſt men that ever wrote, which I have made the foundation of this diſcourſe, might ſerve of itſelf to prove what I have aſſerted; for his authority cannot fail to ſway much with you, eſpecially when you remember that his writings have received the ſanction of divine inſpiration. And HE pronounceth the man happy, who obtaineth WISDOM; that is, right Religion; the true knowledge and love of God *. He aſſures us, that it is "Advantageous:" "The merchandize of it is better than the merchandize of ſilver, and the gain thereof than fine gold. It is more precious than

* See vol. ii. p. 4.

rubies," continues the elegant Solomon, "and all the things thou can'ſt deſire, are not to be compared unto her." In particular, "length of days is in her right hand, and in her left hand RICHES"—the ever-durable riches of immortality and glory—and not riches only, but alſo "Honour;"—the honour which comes from God, and which ſhall reflect from the brightneſs of his preſence upon all his bleſſed attendants. Nor is it "Advantageous" and "Honourable" only, it is likewiſe highly "Pleaſant."—"Her ways are ways of pleaſantneſs,"—Pleaſantneſs itſelf is with her; pure, unmixed, ſteadfaſt and ſatisfying: "all her paths are peace;" even preſent and eternal peace: "for ſhe is a tree of life, life immortal in the Paradiſe of God *, to them that lay hold of her, and happy is every one that retaineth her."

Thus you ſee the three great objects of all worldly deſires join to recommend RELIGION to you; "Honour," "Profit," "Pleaſure."

* See Gen. ii. 9, and compare Revel. xxii. 2, 14.

Theſe ſhall be yours, theſe ſhall eternally be yours, in their higheſt perfection, if you are wiſe enough to lay hold of and retain this excellent wiſdom, this pure and holy Religion, which unites to God, and eſtabliſheth the kingdom of Chriſt in the happy heart.

I. In the firſt place, HONOUR ſhall be yours. Such honour as imperfect ſinful creatures like us might contemplate at a diſtance with wonder; but muſt conſider as near to us, and capable of becoming our own, with the profoundeſt humiliation. For the eternal and omnipotent Lord of Heaven, whoſe word is life, and whoſe favour is the fulneſs of bliſs, this adorable God of glory, not only condeſcends to admit us to his courts, to hear and grant our petitions; but graciouſly to become our father, and to adopt us into his family and love. His only begotten Son vouchſafes to be the advocate for us; and as in mercy unutterable he died to redeem, ſo doth he ever live to intercede for and bleſs us. While we continue in our

ſtate of probation, and at a diſtance from our Father's houſe, ſo much doth he delight to honour us, that his eternal Spirit ſhall be ſent forth to dwell with, to guide and comfort us; and his holy Angels ſhall become miniſters of protection to the children of their heavenly King. And when emancipated from the preſent ſcene, the only Begotten ſhall welcome us to the fulneſs of joy, where dwells the Father of goodneſs and of glory, and we ſhall inherit all thoſe priviledges, honours, and bleſſings, which God hath provided for thoſe who love him!

Tell me now, what earthly Honours can in any degree equal theſe of the Chriſtian? Do men glory in the greatneſs of their Birth, and the nobility of their Parents?—Lo! the Father of Chriſtians is great above all greatneſs, the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords; *And ye ſhall be my ſons and daughters, ſaith the Lord God Almighty.* Do men glory in the favour of their Prince, their acceſs to his perſon, and his readineſs to grant their requeſts?—Behold, we have a free acceſs unto

God the Father, through our Lord Jeſus Chriſt: *Whatſoever*, ſaith he, *ye ſhall aſk the Father in my name, he will give it you.* We may open our hearts to him in this time of abſence, and ſhall be heard: hereafter we ſhall ſee him, as he is; ſee him and be for ever with him, partaking his goodneſs, and ſharing his love. Do men glory in exalted places or preferments?—But, what are theſe, even the moſt exalted, in compariſon of that everlaſting recompence of reward, that unutterably bleſſed manſion, which God hath promiſed, and which Chriſt is gone before to prepare for us!

As reaſonable creatures we cannot but be ſenſible of the Majeſty of God, of our own comparative littleneſs and imperfections, and conſequently of the ſuperlative "Honour" which accrues to us, from our alliance with him, and our permiſſion to adore and ſerve him. Whence then can it come to paſs, that we ſo often find human creatures aſhamed of that, which is their greateſt honour, their nobleſt priviledge;—aſhamed

of avowing their conſcientious regard to the Deity, and the high ſenſe they have or ought to have, of the wondrous mercies which Chriſt hath procured for them? Were we indeed independant, and could we from our ſingle efforts procure felicity, we might with ſome ſhew of reaſon neglect the dread Lord of the univerſe; though even then it would be weak, to be inſenſible to the charms of his goodneſs, and the greatneſs of his power. But, on the other ſide, now that to him we owe every breath of life we draw; now that on his will depends every moment of our continuance in being; now that on his diſpoſal hangs all our preſent and all our future good; how can we ſolve the unaccountable deluſion? what can we anſwer to our ſouls, when we are aſhamed of, or for worldly reaſons neglect, ſuch a God, with ſuch invaluable privileges? How differently are we uſed to act in our temporal concerns! how fond to attain the honours, and to procure the tranſitory favour of tranſitory beings like ourſelves! If Princes admit us to the leaſt degree of regard, if eminent nobles and diſ-

tinguiſhed perſonages vouchſafe to look upon us with a friendly aſpect, how very ſenſible are we of the honour, and how ready, in general, to declare it too? But when God, the everlaſting, omnipotent God, whoſe greatneſs paſſeth comprehenſion, and whoſe goodneſs exceedeth all expreſſion and praiſe; when He humbles himſelf ſo far as to invite us to his love; to invite us,—amazing condeſcenſion,—even by his only begotten Son! when he encourages us to ſerve him by promiſes of the moſt engaging and intereſting nature; when he offers to adopt us into his family, and to give us the glorious inheritance of his children;—we can be inſenſible to theſe invitations, theſe offers, theſe promiſes, though we are created only to ſecure and enjoy them! Nay, and almoſt bluſh, in many caſes, to be ſuppoſed Religious, or to mention with due veneration that NAME, which is above every Name; and which, to creatures like us, ſhould be our higheſt honour to mention, our trueſt delight to ſpeak of, the only ſubject of our praiſe! So at leaſt thought St. Paul, when he ſaid

I am not aſhamed of the Goſpel of Chriſt! or, *God forbid that I ſhould glory, ſave in the Croſs of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt!* And there is good reaſon, why we ſhould thus glory; why we ſhould not be aſhamed of that Goſpel; *for it is the power of God unto ſalvation to every one that believeth!* A ſmall ſhare of reflection, a little uſe of that Reaſon which is given us for the nobleſt purpoſes, will ſuffice to make us duly ſenſible of the exalted "Honour" which is done to worms like us, by the attention we gain from the God of glory; by the permiſſion we enjoy of approaching his adorable Majeſty; by prayer, and praiſe, and all his appointed ordinances. Nor ſhall we ever be backward to avow our heart's whole attachment to him, when we remember his awful declaration, *Whoſoever is aſhamed of me, and of my words, of him will the Son of man alſo be aſhamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father, and of the holy Angels.*

I have dwelt the longer on this topic, becauſe ſome are apt to repreſent Religion as a mean and worthleſs thing; and as others, not duly reflecting on the inеſtimable privi-

ledges to which Chriſtianity entitles them, are backward to expreſs their approbation of that divine ſcheme of holineſs and peace; that evidence of the greateſt good-will to man; that inſtrument, in the hands of the Deity, to inveſt him with "Honours," as much ſuperior to the honours of this world, as Heaven to Earth, as Eternity to Time: Honours beſtowed by HIM, who, as St. John expreſſeth it, *is the Prince of the Kings of the Earth; who hath loved us, and waſhed us from our ſins in his blood, and will make us Kings and Prieſts unto God and his Father, and we ſhall reign with him for ever and ever* * !

II. After this, can we doubt of the "Advantages" which will accompany our ſincere profeſſions of this dying maſter's Faith? For what Advantages can be greater, more worthy our unwearied purſuit, than thoſe ſpecified in the preceding paſſage; the pardon of our ſins, the purification of our nature, and the gift of life eternal and

* Revel. i. 5, 6. v. 10.

full of glory! Is not the merchandize of theſe better than of ſilver, and the gain of them better than of fine gold? Are they not more precious than rubies, more valuable than the moſt invaluable of earthly things! Yea, what of earthly, mortal, and uncertain can be compared with heavenly, immortal, and immutable? What is it that men more earneſtly covet, than length of days and riches? Is not the wiſh of almoſt every carnal heart, "Give me wealth, and give me long life, gracious heaven, to enjoy it!"—Be Religious, and this bleſſing is indiſputably yours. Your gain ſhall be a long life, even a life eternal; and you ſhall enjoy riches, the never-failing treaſures of the celeſtial kingdom; treaſures which wax not old; ſafely ſtored beyond the reach of ſpoil or decay; ſatisfying, ever-during treaſures! Oh, how unlike the wealth of this world: which is painful in the procural, uncertain and unſatisfying in the poſſeſſion, and in the end falſe and deceitful; ſure to forſake and deſert, if not to accuſe and condemn us!

For ſuch "Advantages" one might well be content to forego a thouſand temporary gratifications: and acting upon thoſe principles which actuate the conduct of mankind in general, ſurely we ſhould not be backward to bear much preſent labour for the acquiſition of ſo great a future good. The dangers of the ocean and the fatigues of tedious voyages, are borne by the ſailor uncomplaining, in hopes he ſhall at length return to his country, and in a peaceful harbour enjoy the fruits of his toil. Similar reflections might well reconcile us to difficulties and diſadvantages, if any ſuch might be ſuppoſed to ariſe merely from our profeſſion of Religion. But few and inconſiderable are the difficulties and diſadvantages which ariſe from thence, and not worthy to be compared with thoſe that proceed from worldly cauſes, from our own imprudence, vice, and folly. Nay, indeed, ſuch is the Advantage of the Religion of Chriſt, that it attends us in this world, as well as in the next; and it is our beſt "Intereſt," not only reſpecting futurity, but Time and this life alſo, to be ſincerely Religious.

The advantages of Time are, in truth, ſo inferior to thoſe of Eternity, that they ſcarcely deſerve to be named after them; and it would ſeem almoſt to wrong your judgments to imagine that you want any other proof of the real profit of Religion, than the certainty of its procuring pardon of ſins, purification of ſoul, and everlaſting bleſſedneſs. Yet, to ſhew the excellence of this divine WISDOM, as well as the goodneſs of our God, we may remark, and we are authorized in that remark by the inſpired penman, "that Godlineſs is profitable unto all things; having the promiſe of the life which now is, as well as of that which is to come *." Nay, we are aſſured by truth infallible, by wiſdom eſſential, that "if we firſt ſeek the kingdom of God and his righteouſneſs, all things neceſſary to life and well-being ſhall be added to us †." If temporal riches and abundance be proper and convenient for us, they ſhall be given; if otherwiſe, the deſire of them ſhall be taken away,

* 1 Tim. iv. 8. † Mark vi. 33.

and chearful content ſhall ſupply the place of abundance. We ſhall be taught to enjoy what we have with thankfulneſs and ſerenity; to reſign what we loſe with compoſure and peace: we ſhall be taught to improve what we poſſeſs, to the beſt advantage; and to make friends, unfailing friends of the mammon of unrighteouſneſs. Thus Religion is highly profitable, even for this life, as well as for that which is to come: ſecuring to us the beſt Advantages here, and what is infinitely more important, the beſt advantages hereafter; advantages real, ſatisfying, ſure, and everlaſting. It hurts not, it cannot hurt any of our true and proper intereſts upon earth; it ſtimulates induſtry; it encourages application; it enforces the practice of all the ſocial and moral virtues: it renders us moſt capable to fulfil thoſe virtues, by correcting our paſſions, and preſerving us from the practice and diſquietude of vice: It will procure us the moſt important advantages in this life; it will enable us to enjoy theſe advantages, and with the higheſt PLEA-

SURE: for "her ways are ways of pleaſantneſs," as well as ways of honour and profit.

III. In whatever view we conſider Religion, we ſhall find that it anſwers the character here given, and affords the pureſt and higheſt "Pleaſure" we can enjoy in this world. I mean not to inſiſt at preſent upon the future pleaſure which it promiſes; as that pleaſure, exalted indeed, is, we know, utterly unattainable without it.

Now it is a point, in which we all are agreed, that the "Mind" is not only the more noble part of us; but that as it is moſt capable of pleaſure, ſo are its pleaſures infinitely ſuperior to thoſe of the body. For ſo little gratified is the mind very often found, with mere bodily indulgences, that it diſturbs the whole peace of the man who purſues them; and allows him to have neither reſt nor ſatisfaction in the purſuit. But, whether you conſider Religion as engaging the "Underſtanding," or rejoicing the "Conſcience," you will find that it affords the "Mind"

the moſt complete and ſubſtantial ſatisfaction.

For what objects can the Underſtanding contemplate more great, more new, more intereſting, than thoſe which Religion preſents! than God, his wonders, and works; his mercy and love! Objects, which may well occupy the mind's whole attention; for the more we contemplate the more we ſhall love; and the more we love, the happier of courſe we ſhall become. And when we reflect, that this is no barren and diſtant contemplation, which merely amuſes, but one that affects our deareſt intereſts; when we recollect that the great God whoſe glories we contemplate is our Father: that the only begotten Son, whoſe matchleſs love we adore with trembling, manifeſted that love for our ſake and for our ſalvation: that the bleſſed Spirit, co-equal and co-eternal with the Father and the Son, is our comforter and guide; that He, who ſpread the blue expanſe above us, who ſpoke, and it was done, who commanded, and all Creation roſe into being, is

our ſhield and our defence, Almighty to ſave, and ever watchful in goodneſs to comfort and bleſs! When thus we contemplate the great truths of Religion, can the "Underſtanding" fail to receive the higheſt pleaſure?—If Speculation affords the mind any delight, (and what thinking mind is ignorant of its delights?) the higheſt, certainly, muſt be received from the conſideration of Religious truths.

But when theſe truths are carried into practice, and the "Conſcience" gives in its favourable evidence, "Oh well is that man, and happy ſhall he be!" Conſcience undoubtedly is the great repoſitory of all thoſe pleaſures, which can afford any ſolid refreſhment to the ſoul: For when this is calm and ſerene, then properly, but then alone a man enjoys himſelf: and he muſt do this, before he can enjoy any thing elſe. But it is only the practice of ſincere Religion which can authorize a man's conſcience to ſpeak comfortably to him. It is this which muſt word the ſentence, before the conſcience can pronounce it; and then it will do it with

Majeſty and authority: it will not whiſper, but proclaim a jubilee to the mind; it will not drop, but pour in oil upon the wounded heart. And is there any pleaſure comparable to that, which ſprings from hence? The pleaſures of conſcience are not only greater than all other pleaſures, but may ſerve well inſtead of them: The latter only pleaſe and affect the mind in paſſing, in the pitiful narrow compaſs of actual enjoyment; they will not bear a retroſpect: whereas the pleaſure of Conſcience entertains, and continually entertains with durable reflections *." Look upon the wretch haunted with a guilty mind, amidſt all the affluence of this world; and look upon the Chriſtian, rejoicing in the teſtimony of a good conſcience, even in poverty and an afflicted eſtate; and ſay, whether the pleaſures of Religion are not exquiſite and deſirable!

I would juſt remark, That it appears agreeable to every dictate of right reaſon, and

* See South's Sermons, vol. i.

the nature of things, that Religion ſhould procure for the ſoul of man the higheſt pleaſure; and that ſeparate from it no real pleaſure ſhould be procured. For if, as we believe, the ſoul is a ray of the divinity, *breath'd forth* from God *, formed for him, and deſigned to enjoy him eternally; we may conclude, by the ſtrongeſt argument, that nothing but God can fill up that ſoul's deſires, and make it completely happy; and that ſo long as it remains ignorant of God, eſtranged from, and at enmity with him, ſo long it muſt neceſſarily be unhappy. This reaſoning Scripture declares, and long and ſad experience hath proved, to be true.

Were we to reflect upon every ſingle inſtance of duty which we owe to God, we ſhould find that the practice was Pleaſure, and the performance the moſt ample gratification to the mind. But this would carry me into too ſpacious a field: I muſt leave it therefore to your own ſpeculation, and, let

* See Geneſis, chap. ii. ver. 14.

me hope, my young friends, to your own experience alſo; whilſt I proceed to obſerve, that not only from the pleaſure it affords "the Underſtanding," and the comfort it adminiſters to "the Conſcience;" but from the happy "reſtraint it lays upon the paſſions and appetites," Religion is a ſource of the higheſt "Pleaſure."

We are all but too well convinced, what evils and inconveniencies, what uneaſineſs and anxiety have ariſen to us, from thoſe corrupt appetites which dwell in our hearts, and fight againſt our peace. Indeed, what greater evil can befal a man, than a ſlavery to his paſſions? What a continual torment are envy and malice, are pride and diſcontent! How diſmal in their conſequences the indulgence of luſt, and the foul deeds of intemperance! How painful and afflicting the familiarity with any one ſpecies of vice! Nay, in truth, let us honeſtly confeſs that what of unhappineſs or miſery we ſhare in this life, at leaſt its far greater portion, hath ariſen from our own depraved tempers, paſſions, and

vices. We cannot doubt then, but that whatever tends to deliver us from the dominion of theſe, muſt tend to our higheſt pleaſure. Now the very firſt ſtep in Chriſt's Religion is to combat, and the whole buſineſs of it is to conquer, theſe irregular and diſtreſſing evils; and to plant in their ſtead virtues, as amiable in their own nature, and as neceſſarily productive of true happineſs, as the oppoſite vices are odious and abominable, and productive of unqueſtionable miſery.

In this view therefore, the "ways of WISDOM are ways of pleaſantneſs, and paths of real peace:" It teaches us to love all mankind; to rejoice in their good; to abſtain from every defiling practice; to cultivate every excellent virtue. It ſhews us ourſelves, and leads us to that divine humility, which alone would make man bleſſed. It diffuſes a ſweet ſerenity over our ſouls, and delivers us from all thoſe vexatious terrors, which dwell in the breaſt, nay, and often murder the whole repoſe, of vice. It is true—and I remark it with concern,—ſo

rarely are men in earneſt, or at leaſt ſo very lukewarm in their Religious endeavours, that they enjoy not all the Pleaſures which Religion would beſtow, becauſe they do not reſolutely combat all the paſſions which are the chief obſtacles to their abundant Peace. But let it be obſerved, that this is no objection to the full pleaſantneſs which Religion offers: Men muſt blame themſelves, if they do not perform the conditions on which that pleaſantneſs is propoſed. Hence, or from a partial diſcharge of duty, the comforts flowing from Religion are frequently unexperienced; and often, many truly deſerving perſons are deprived of thoſe comforts, through falſe and ſevere repreſentations of that gracious ſyſtem of love and peace, which is calculated to remove every fear of deſpondency, to diſpel every doubt of the penitent and ſorrowful, and to diffuſe conſolation and joy over the believing heart. I muſt not conceal it too, as another cauſe why the pleaſures of Religion are often unknown, that it is no uncommon ſight to obſerve men ſtrenuouſly combating for "modes of faith," and for

"peculiar doctrines," which they call, and perhaps think Religion; while they forget the ſubdual of their evil tempers and vicious paſſions. Zealous in hearing and talking of the faith, and very warm in their judgments and cenſures of others, they are not by any means heedful and anxious, as they ought, to improve and amend themſelves; and to implant the divine virtues in their hearts: that ſo they might at once recommend Religion by their own amiable practice, and by the happineſs viſibly produced by it in their own minds and conſciences.

For Religion is a real and internal thing; and ſuch too is happineſs; which if it be not found within our own breaſts, we ſhall ſearch for it in vain through the circle of all earthly enjoyments. And there can be no happineſs within, but that which ariſes from an approving conſcience and well-regulated affections *. Where

* "He that has Light within his own clear Breaſt,
May ſit i' the Centre, and enjoy bright Day:
But he that hides a dark Soul, and foul Thoughts,
Benighted walks under the mid-day Sun;
Himſelf is his own Dungeon."

MILTON's COMUS.

theſe are, happineſs muſt be found. So that it follows by plain conſequence, that pure and undefiled Religion, which gives joy to the conſcience, and a right biaſs to the affections, muſt give to man the higheſt and moſt perfect Pleaſure.

But let us advance one ſtep farther, and conſider Religion, as it relates to our "Neighbour," as well as to "God" and "Ourſelves." Now as the Religion of Chriſt teaches us to be quiet, peaceable, benevolent, and charitable; to be punctual and honeſt, diligent and induſtrious in our proper ſphere; not to intermeddle with the concerns of others, but wherever we have an opportunity, to do good and to adminiſter comfort; It evidently teaches us ſo to live as to ſecure the greateſt ſerenity, and to avoid the greateſt evils which diſturb and vex the peace of ſocial life. Indeed the ſubdual of our corrupt tempers and paſſions, lays the foundation not only for peace and pleaſure in our own minds, but for peace and pleaſure in every intercourſe of life. For whence, but from pride and malice,

from envy and cenſure, from buſy curioſity and mean ſelf-love;—whence but from indulged luſts, neglect of our own proper buſineſs, from idleneſs, and the daring tranſgreſſion of divine and human laws, comes all the evil which oppreſſes ſociety?—He therefore who lives a ſtranger to theſe, who lives in a practice directly contrary, as he is a bleſſing to others, ſo doth he treaſure up the pureſt and moſt peaceful pleaſure to himſelf. Nor can we well conceive a more amiable, —I am ſure we cannot form an idea of a happier being—than He, who, ſteadfaſt in his love to God, and thankful for the mercies of an atoning Saviour, continually endeavours through the Grace of Chriſt to combat and conquer all his evil affections; while he ſhews forth in his life his gratitude to his God and Father, by good-will to his brethren,—to all mankind; diligent in his ſtation, humble in his mind, compaſſionate to his fellow-creatures; juſt in his dealings, friendly in his actions, ſerene and chearful in his whole deportment; glad to promote univerſal harmony and peace, and to make all participate of that happy "Religion," which he

himſelf profeſſes, of that exquiſite "Pleaſure," which he himſelf enjoys!

Such are the fruits of true Religion; which deprives of no one rational ſatisfaction; which forbids no one enjoyment, that a wiſe or good man would wiſh to ſhare; nay rather, which heightens every earthly pleaſure, and gives the ſweeteſt reliſh to all thoſe temporal bleſſings, which the Father of mercy hath graciouſly provided for his creatures. Tell me then, are not its ways "ways of Peace, and pleaſantneſs?" what hath earth to give, which can be compared to the fruit of this tree of life! a fruit, which never ſatiates, never wearies? Enjoy theſe pleaſures, and you may ſtill enjoy them. They are for ever new, and for ever delightful. This cannot be ſaid of any other ſatisfactions upon earth: all of theſe ſatiate and weary, from the beſtial joys of the Epicure and Drunkard, even to the more refined purſuits of Ambition and Honour. The fruit of this tree of life, this matchleſs pleaſure too, is peculiarly your own; it is not in the power of all the world to rob you

of it: He, who has the property, may be ſure of the perpetuity alſo. But this, again, cannot be ſaid of any outward and mortal enjoyments, each of which are ſubject to the power of innumerable changes and chances. But nothing can injure the happineſs which is centered in our own breaſts; no, not even Time itſelf: It will live with us, even beyond the grave!—Indeed it is then, moſt truly ſpeaking, that this happineſs, this peace and pleaſure of Religion, ſhall fully flouriſh and abound!

Surely after this, there can be no need to exhort you to the practice of this holy Religion, which is thus fraught with conſummate pleaſure. For if you act conſiſtently, "ſuch pleaſure" muſt draw you to its enjoyment, and make you anxious for its poſſeſſion!

You, my beloved, who have experienced the "Pleaſures" of that Religion, which I have endeavoured to ſet forth, Oh ſpeak in the important cauſe, and recommend it to others, from your own happy knowledge.

In particular recommend it, as truly amiable to the RISING GENERATION; and win by the fair repreſentation, the YOUTH, the flower of our country, to the bleſſed, the delightful ſervice of the Lord of love. Tell them how agreeable to right reaſon and your true intereſt you have ever found the rules and dictates of Religion; Tell them how comfortable and pleaſant you have found the exerciſes of devotion; and with what truth you can ſay with David, "I had rather be a door-keeper in the houſe of the Lord, than dwell in the tents of ungodlineſs." Tell them how ſufficient you have found the pleaſure of Religion, to overcome the pains and troubles of ſenſe and the world, to take out the ſting of them, and to diveſt them of their terror. Oh tell them of the abundant conſolation which true Chriſtianity hath to adminiſter in every trial and affliction! And tell them, that the cloſer you have kept to the paths of Righteouſneſs, the bett r progreſs you have made in Wiſdom's ways; the more hath your Pleaſure abounded, the more hath your Peace been increaſed. Tell them, that the ſincere and perfect diſcharge of duty

never brought any thing but ſolid and ſubſtantial joy; and that pain and diſquietude are the certain conſequence of every deviation from it!—Tell them, what ineſtimable benefits, what invaluable priviledges rejoice your hearts: Peace with God, through Chriſt; communion with him by the bleſſed Spirit; freedom from the condemnation of ſin; from the fear of death; a thankful, ſanctified uſe of all temporal bleſſings; the heart at eaſe, the conſcience clear, the animated hope! Tell them of the "Pleaſure" high, rational, angelical, debaſed by no future ſad and melancholy reflections; a pleaſure, made for the ſoul, and the ſoul for it; ſuitable to its ſpirituality, and equal to all its capacities: a pleaſure, which grows freſher upon enjoyment, which may properly be called our own; liable to no accident, expoſed to no injury, the foretaſte of Heaven, and the earneſt of a bleſſed Eternity!

And will not this repreſentation engage you, "my young hearers," early and diligently to cultivate the knowledge of that divine Religion, which will procure you

ſuch invaluable PLEASURE? Pleaſure is the aim and wiſh of your age. Behold, none is ſo pure, none is ſo perfect, none will improve ſo much; nay, all will ſatiate, will diſguſt and weary, except the divine and god-like pleaſure, which ſprings from piety and virtue. Oh "get theſe,—for their price is above rubies;—and happy ſhall you be!" happy in the favour of your God, happy in the love of your Redeemer; happy in the peace and ſerenity of your minds; happy in the tender and endearing affection of your parents; happy in the eſteem of your friends; happy ſhall you be in yourſelves, and happy ſhall you make all thoſe connected with you. Therefore, "above all things get WISDOM, and with all thy getting get underſtanding. Exalt her, and ſhe ſhall promote thee: ſhe ſhall bring thee to honour, when thou doſt embrace her; ſhe ſhall give to thy head an ornament of grace, a crown of glory ſhall ſhe deliver to thee. She is a tree of life to them that lay hold of her, and happy is every one that retaineth her."

Such are the PLEASURES which RELIGION offers: how different, my young friends, from thoſe ſordid, unſatisfying ſenſual purſuits, which have heretofore paſſed under our examination * !—But who would put in competition the joys of brutes, and the delights of Angels!—Religion preſents the latter; ſenſuality and ſin the former. 'Tis yours to make the choice; and on that choice depends your everlaſting fate. The infinite goodneſs of God propoſes the moſt perfect pleaſure here and hereafter to you. You cannot be unhappy, if you ſerve Him with all your ſoul. If you neglect to do ſo, whatever your ſtate and condition, high or low, rich or poor; whatever your earthly acquiſitions or wants, you cannot in the nature of things be truly happy. Your mind will for ever be reſtleſs: for it wants its proper good; and without that good, it muſt be reſtleſs and miſerable for ever!

Make then, I intreat you,—as my laſt, beſt and parting counſel,—make a wiſe choice, my dear young friends! Love the Lord, and

* See vol. ii.

he will love you *; cleave early to Him, and he will never forſake you. The more you advance in the ways of truth and virtue, the more perfect and undefiled will your ſatisfactions prove, and the greater reliſh will you have of thoſe real and rational "Pleaſures," which theſe ſincere endeavours of mine have recommended (let me hope and pray not without effect) to your complete enjoyment.

And "Oh ye careful PARENTS:—for I cannot conclude without once more addreſſing you; addreſſing you firſt † and laſt, as ſo much of the welfare of our youth, of the riſing generation, depends upon YOU;—Ye careful worthy Parents, watchful for the welfare of your darling offspring, ſollicitous for their happineſs, and anxious to ſecure their peace and pleaſure; See, ſee, where theſe bleſſings may aſſuredly be found; and with unremitting diligence form the young mind to the love of Religion, and to the

* See Proverbs, chap. viii. ver. 17, and the firſt Diſcourſe.

† See the latter end of the firſt Sermon.

practice of thoſe amiable duties, which JESUS CHRIST hath enjoined. Guard them from the dangerous and deluſive ruin of ſubtle, faſhionable, and inſinuating Infidelity: from the weak and wild abſurdities of ſtaring impetuous Enthuſiaſm. And to that end, draw them by the cords of ſimple Truth and plain Reaſon to the love of God, of duty, and of virtue. Teach them the eternal, the unalterable difference between theſe and vice; and convince them how much it is their Intereſt, their Happineſs, their Honour, reſpecting both Time and eternity, to obey the Goſpel of Chriſt; that is, to live as becomes Men. You will reap the pleaſing profit of ſuch inſtructions, in the obedience and the felicity of your children; and laying by a right a wiſe and Religious EDUCATION, the ſolid baſis of their future good, you will have no cauſe to lament, with numbers of thoſe who fatally omit this prime duty in our luxurious diſſipated days;—No cauſe to lament with them, the neglect of Parental Love, and the heart-piercing anguiſh of Filial Ingratitude and Unkindneſs. *Which*, &c.

END OF THE SERMONS.

Anecdotes on Religion.

(1.) A young lady being aſked, by a friend, the important queſtion, "What is Religion?" it produced the following definition, which we inſert in juſtice to the fair Author.

"Religion is a generous lively flame,
That brightens, not deforms the human frame;
In the cloſe covert of the heart it lies,
Beams there, nor ſternly threatens in the eyes.
An unaffected eaſe its actions' grace,
Known by the motions of the Soul, not Face.
No ſour reſtraint, no forc'd concern it wears,
No bidden ſighs, no oſtentatious tears.
No ſelf-applauding ſhrugs; no cenſure, ſtrife,
Nor ſpleen, at all the blameleſs joys of life;
As wide from theſe are Virtue's native charms,
As ſettled Courage from confus'd alarms;
As ſolid Reaſon's calm conſiderate train
From the wild phrenzies of a feveriſh brain."

(2.) "It is found by experience, ſays Dean Swift, That thoſe men who ſet up for Morality, without regard to Religion, are generally virtuous but in part: They will be juſt in their dealings between man and man,

but if they find themſelves diſpoſed to pride, luſt, intemperance, or avarice, they do not think their morality concerned to check them in any of theſe vices; becauſe it is the great rule of ſuch men, that they may lawfully follow the dictates of nature, wherever their ſafety, honour and fortune are not injured. So that upon the whole, there is hardly one vice, which a mere moral man may not upon ſome occaſions allow himſelf to practiſe. This may ſerve to ſhew the weakneſs and uncertainty of that falſe principle, "moral honeſty," which many people ſet up in the place of conſcience, for a guide to their actions." See his Works, vol. xi. p. 204.

(3.) When Protagoras the ſceptick, whoſe ſtrange caprices led him to doubt of every thing, even though he ſaw or felt it, began his book by ſaying, "As for the Gods, whether they are or are not, I have nothing to ſay;" the magiſtrates of Athens highly reſented this profane trifling with things ſacred, baniſhed him out of their city, and con-

demned his book to be burnt by the common executioner. And afterwards, when he and his friend Pyrrho were aſked, why they walked ſo much alone, they anſwered, "It was to meditate how they might be good." And being hereupon further aſked, what neceſſity there was for being good, if it were certain that there is no God; they replied, "It cannot be aſcertained that there is no God; and therefore it is prudence to provide for the worſt."

(4.) Epicurus, diſdaining the abſurd notion of a multitude of Gods and Goddeſſes, and deteſting that account of them which mankind had taken up gratis, from the Poets and other fabulous writers; he ſet his philoſophiſing wit to work to give an account of the beginning and continuance of all things in nature, without the admiſſion of a Deity. Accordingly, he advances a ſuppoſition ſtill more phantaſtical if poſſible, than all which had gone before; namely, that the world derived its origin from a fortunate confluence of infinite particles of matter, which he

called Atoms; and this he affirms with a degree of confidence greater than one could have expected on ſo ludicrous a ſubject. Yet after all he leaves his ſcholars to labour under inſuperable difficulties about the eternity, the ſhapes, the firſt mover of his atoms, and the production of creatures endowed with ſenſe and underſtanding out of thoſe inſenſible parts; with many other forcible objections, which utterly invalidate this cobweb hypotheſis. His great admirer, Lucretius, however highly commends this philoſophical chimæra, and extols its author; but in ſuch daring terms, as will brand and ſtigmatize him in the opinion of all ſober men to the end of the world: For he celebrates Epicurus as the firſt that dared to encounter the notion of a Deity, and had thereby ſet the minds of men free from the fear of God, which had ſo long kept them in awe. And yet we are aſſured by Cotta, "That ſo far was he from gaining his beloved eaſe and pleaſure hereby, that no ſchool-boy was ever more afraid of a rod, than Epicurus was of death and a Deity," though in words he ſeemed to de-

ſpiſe both. "So hard is it (as the learned Biſhop Stillingfleet obſerves) for an Epicurean, even after he hath proſtituted his conſcience, to ſilence it: but, whatever there be in the air, there is certainly an elaſtical power in the Conſcience, that will bear itſelf up, notwithſtanding the weight that is laid upon it, to ſtifle and kill its clamours."

(5.) What a bleſſing to mankind was the ingenuous, humble, and pious Mr. Boyle! what a common peſt was the fallacious, proud, and impious Hobbes! Accordingly we find that the former bad adieu to the world with the utmoſt ſerenity, honour, and hope; while the latter went out of it in the dark, and with terrible apprehenſions of an unknown Future. He had been an inſtrument of the prince of darkneſs, in poiſoning many young gentlemen and others, with his wicked principles, as the Earl of Rocheſter confeſſed with extreme compunction and grief upon his death bed. It is remarked by thoſe who critically obſerved the Author of the "Leviathan," that though in a hu-

mour of bravado, he would ſpeak very ſtrange and unbecoming things of God; yet in his ſtudy, in the dark, and in his retired thoughts, he trembled before him. Many appear like Atheiſts in their mirth, amidſt wine and company, who are quite of other ſentiments in ſickneſs, and gloom, and ſolitude. What could make this ſtrange man awake in ſuch terror and amazement if his candle happened to go out in the night? What, but that he was unable to bear the diſmal reflections of his dark and deſolate mind; and knew not how to extinguiſh, nor how to bear, the light of "the candle of the Lord" within him!

(6.) Dr. Doddridge, in his Life of that memorable convert, Colonel Gardiner, informs us, "That his fine conſtitution, than which perhaps there was hardly ever a better, gave him great opportunities of indulging himſelf in exceſſes; and his good ſpirits enabled him to purſue his pleaſures of every kind, in ſo alert and ſprightly a manner, that multitudes envied him, and called him by a dreadful kind of compliment, "the

happy Rake." Yet ſtill the checks of conſcience, and ſome remaining principles of ſo good an education as he had received, would break in upon his moſt licentious hours; and I particularly remember he told me, that when ſome of his diſſolute companions were once congratulating him on his diſtinguiſhed felicity, a dog happening at that time to come into the room, he could not forbear groaning inwardly, and ſaying to himſelf, "Oh that I were that dog!" Such was then his happineſs; and ſuch perhaps is that of hundreds more, who bear themſelves higheſt in the contempt of Religion, and glory in that infamous ſervitude which they call Liberty." See the Life, p. 23.

(7.) It is owing to the forbidding and unlovely conſtraint with which men of low conceptions act, when they think they conform themſelves to Religion, as well as to the more odious conduct of hypocrites, that the word "Chriſtian," does not carry with it, at firſt view, all that is great, worthy, friendly, generous, and heroick. The man

who ſuſpends his hopes of the reward of worthy actions till after death; who can charitably beſtow unſeen; who can overlook hatred; who can do good to his ſlanderer; who can never be angry at his friend, never revengeful to his enemy; is certainly formed for the benefit of ſociety. Yet theſe are ſo far from heroic virtues, that they are but the ordinary duties of a Chriſtian.

(8.) Mr. Locke ſomewhere obſerves, "That morality becomes a gentleman, not barely as a Man, but in order to his buſineſs as a Gentleman; and the morality of the Goſpel, ſays he, doth ſo excel that of all other books, that to give a man a full knowledge of true morality, I ſhould ſend him to no other book than the New Teſtament."

(9.) Xenophon informs us, that Cyrus, before all other things preferred the worſhip of the Gods, and a reſpect for Religion. Upon this head therefore he thought himſelf obliged to beſtow his firſt and peculiar care. He accordingly began by eſtabliſhing a number

of Magi, or Prieſts, to ſing daily a morning ſervice of praiſe to the honour of the Gods, and to offer ſacrifices; which was daily practiſed among the Perſians of ſucceeding ages. The Prince's diſpoſition quickly became, as is uſual, the prevailing diſpoſition among the People, and his example became the rule of their conduct *. Cyrus, on the other hand, was extremely glad to find in them ſuch ſentiments of Religion; being convinced that whoſoever ſincerely fears and worſhips God, will at the ſame time be faithful to his King, and preſerve an inviolable attachment to his perſon, and to the welfare of the ſtate.

(10.) Antalcidas, a Spartan, being about to enter into holy orders, was aſked by the Prieſt, what action worthy of renown he had performed during his life. He replied, "If I have performed any, the Gods themſelves are acquainted with it." How noble an inſtance of modeſty! how exalted a notion of the Deity! Surely, nothing can be

* "Regis ad exemplum totus componitur orbis."

more fooliſh, than to imagine by the oſtentation of our actions to recommend ourſelves to that Deity, who, of whatever nature thoſe actions may be, muſt have the cleareſt knowledge of their quality and worth.

(11.) Anaximenes being aſked how he could ſo calmly purſue his ſtudies, confined as he was to a priſon, and expecting death; he anſwered, "That his ſoul was not confined, having as large a walk as the Heavens which he ſtudied; nor frighted, having an hope as great as the Immortality which he looked for."

(12.) During the retreat of the famous King Alfred, at Athelney in Somerſetſhire, after the defeat of his forces by the Danes, the following circumſtance happened, which, while it convinces us of the extremities to which that great man was reduced, will give us a ſtriking proof of his pious and benevolent diſpoſition. A beggar came to his little caſtle there, and requeſted alms;

when his Queen informed him "that they had only one ſmall loaf remaining, which was inſufficient for themſelves and their friends, who were gone abroad in queſt of food, though with little hopes of ſucceſs. The King replied, "Give the poor Chriſtian one half of the loaf. He that could feed 5000 men with five loaves and two fiſhes, can certainly make that half of the loaf ſuffice for more than our neceſſities." Accordingly the poor man was relieved; and this noble act of charity ſoon recompenſed by a providential ſtore of freſh proviſions, with which his people returned.

(13.) Of all the ſingular virtues which united in the character of Guſtavus Adolphus of Sweden, That which crowned the whole was his exemplary piety to God: The following is related of him, when he was once in his camp before Werben. He had been alone in the cabinet of his pavilion ſome hours together, and none of his attendants at theſe ſeaſons durſt interrupt him. At length however, a favourite of his having

ſome important matter to tell him, came ſoftly to the door, and looking in beheld the King very devoutly on his knees at prayer. Fearing to moleſt him in that ſacred exerciſe, he was about to withdraw his head, when the King eſpied him, and bidding him come in, ſaid, "Thou wondereſt to ſee me in this poſture, ſince I have ſo many thouſands of ſubjects to pray for me: But I tell thee, that no man has more need to pray for himſelf, than He, who, being to render an account of his actions to none but God, is for that reaſon more cloſely aſſaulted by the Devil than all other men beſide."

(14.) Euſebius in his Hiſtory informs us, That St. John, during his miniſtration to the Weſtern Churches, caſt his eye upon a young man remarkable for the extent of his knowledge, and the ingenuouſneſs of his mind. The aged Apoſtle thought that he had diſcovered in him an uſeful inſtrument for the propagating of Chriſtianity; accordingly he took particular pains to convert him, and to inſtruct him in the divine doctrines

of his great maſter; and that he might be ſtill better acquainted with the ſyſtem of Chriſtianity, at his departure he recommended him to the care of a pious old father, who had ſome authority in the infant Church. The youth continued awhile in the duties of his new profeſſion, and attended with care to the lectures of his venerable tutor. But his former aſſociates, when they found themſelves deſerted by him, were grieved at the ſucceſs of the Apoſtle, and exerted their utmoſt efforts to regain ſo uſeful and entertaining a companion. They ſucceeded in their attempts: the Father was forſaken, and his pupil plunged deep into irregularity and vice. The Apoſtle after ſome time returned to thoſe parts; and "where," ſaid he, with impatience to his aged friend, "where is my favourite youth?"—"Alas!" replied the good old man, with tears in his eyes, "he is fallen, irrecoverably fallen: he has forſaken the ſociety of ſaints, and is now a leader of a gang of robbers in the neighbouring mountains." Upon hearing this unexpected and unpleaſing account, the Apoſtle forgot

his ſufferings and his years, and haſtened to the place of rendezvous; where, being ſeized by one of the band, he deſired to ſpeak with their Captain. The Captain being told that a ſtrange pilgrim aſked to be admitted to him, ordered him to be brought before him: but when he beheld the venerable Apoſtle, his hopes of amuſement ſunk, and were changed into ſhame and confuſion; and the hardy leader of a band of robbers, trembled before a poor and helpleſs old man. He quitted once more the ſociety of wickedneſs, and lived and died in the ſervice of his Redeemer.

(15.) The following allegorical "Picture of Ingratitude in a poor Dependant," was drawn by a lady a few years ſince, and is ſo ſuitable to the point in hand, that we make no apology for its length. The reader will readily diſcover its application to man in general, and his ſpiritual concerns. "A certain great perſon was of ſo noble and generous a diſpoſition, that he delighted to communicate happineſs to all around him. Among thoſe whom his bounty raiſed, we will diſ-

tinguiſh one by the name of Orlando. This man he took from a condition low as the mire in the ſtreets, cloathed him and fed him, placed him in a convenient habitation, and beſtowed upon him an ample proviſion to ſupport life with comfort and ſatisfaction; and as he lived in a country where aſſaults and many accidents were frequent, this kind benefactor uſed often to ſend a party of his own ſervants (for he kept vaſt numbers in his retinue) to guard him, particularly whenever he went on any dangerous expedition. When he was ſick, or in any affliction, he never failed to viſit him, to adminiſter relief and comfort to him: There was not a day, in ſhort, in which he did not confer upon him ſome new obligation; and as if all this was too little, He faithfully promiſed him, that if he did not make an ill uſe of the favours he had already received, He would, after trying him a while in his preſent circumſtances, beſtow on him a much greater eſtate, ſituated in a moſt delightful country, where he ſhould live in an elegance and ſplendor he had then no conception of: and in return for all theſe

mighty obligations, his patron only expected that he ſhould pay him frequent viſits; ſometimes in publick, along with other company, who attended his levee, but more frequently in private: That he ſhould behave himſelf in a ſober orderly manner, neither hurting himſelf by being guilty of any exceſſes, nor ſetting an ill example to others. He alſo made him ſteward of ſome ſmall part of his revenue, which he ordered him to diſtribute according to his own diſcretion, among a ſet of his lower dependents, and aſſured him that if he diſcharged this office with diligence and humanity, he ſhould look on it as a favour done to himſelf. And now, would one think it poſſible that Orlando ſhould in a little time grow negligent and forgetful of this noble friend? That when he was abſent from him, he ſhould engroſs but little of his thoughts, and ſtill leſs of his converſation?—that if by chance he was led to talk of him, he ſhould preſently fly off from the ſubject, as if he was aſhamed to mention the perſon to whom he owed his ALL. Nay, could one believe that he would even liſten with a patient ear, while

others ſpoke diſreſpectfully of him, and found fault with his acts of bounty, becauſe they were not diſtributed exactly in that manner which they thought beſt? He viſited him ſometimes, it's true, but his viſits were ſhort and not frequent; and his behaviour ſuch as plainly ſhewed that he went becauſe it was expected from him, or out of cuſtom, more than from any real veneration or love to his benefactor. If he aſked a favour, either for himſelf or any body elſe, he did it with ſuch a careleſs air, as if he did not much trouble his head whether it was granted or not—ſometimes he would make profeſſions of gratitude, but with ſo much coolneſs and indifference, as ſhewed he was very little ſenſible of the obligations he had received. All who attended on public days were expected to behave with great decorum and gravity, for on thoſe occaſions the leaſt degree of levity was looked upon as a breach of reſpect to their patron; but Orlando was ſo far from obſerving theſe rules, that he uſed frequently to be talking and laughing with ſome of the company, and even in the middle of an

addreſs to his friend, he would break off, to take notice of ſomebody's new ſuit of cloaths, or any other ſuch trifle that happened to catch his eye. But there was one part of his behaviour more unpardonable than any of the reſt, which was his neglect of thoſe perſons whom his generous benefactor had entruſted to his care: he ſeldom viſited them, never troubled his head to enquire into their wants, nay, would hardly grant them a ſmall favour when they ſollicited him. After going on for ſome time in this manner, if either the admonitions of a friend, or the conſciouſneſs of his own mind awakened him to a ſenſe of his ingratitude, he would then vouchſafe to make ſome acknowledgments, and to aſk his patron's pardon in a ſupplicating manner; when this inimitable friend, not to be tired out with any provocations, would receive him with open arms, and aſſure him that if he would be more careful to pleaſe him for the future, all that was paſt ſhould be buried in oblivion; but that if he perſiſted to abuſe his kindneſs, he would (if he did not withdraw his preſent bounty) yet certainly diſinherit him of the

noble eſtate he had in reverſion, which was not to be given him till he had undergone a ſevere operation, which had ſo much of fancied terror in it, as made him very willing to keep what he then enjoyed, without looking out for any thing better. But this was not permitted him; for at the expiration of a certain term of years, he was either to be put in poſſeſſion of the promiſed inheritance, or elſe to be puniſhed for not having deſerved it. Again and again he offended, and yet, ſuch was the forgiving goodneſs of his benefactor, that upon his humbling himſelf he as often received him to favour; till at laſt he ſent his grim meſſenger to acquaint him, that the appointed hour was come, the leaſe of his houſe was expired, and he muſt prepare to enter a new habitation. Though at firſt he expreſſed ſome reluctance, yet the ſentence was immediately executed:—But whether he arrived at the delightful country that was promiſed, or whether he ſuffered for the folly and careleſſneſs of his paſt life, is a queſtion yet unreſolved. However, thus much is certain, that when he was juſt going to make trial

of ſo great a change, he heartily wiſhed he had made it the buſineſs of every day of his life to pleaſe his noble friend." See the Chriſtian's Magazine, vol. iii. p. 512.

(16.) An excellent critick introduces a libertine ſpeaking in theſe terms, "When the phyſician is near my bed, my confeſſor is my comforter; I know very well how to hinder Religion from afflicting me when I am well; but I permit her to conſole me when I am ſick. When I have no longer any thing to hope on one hand, Religion preſents herſelf, and gains me over by her promiſes; I then wiſh earneſtly to give myſelf up to her, and to die on the ſide of hope." How many a libertine might we enumerate, who apparently reaſons in this manner, thus egregiouſly deludes himſelf, and is the dupe of his own licentiouſneſs. And how aptly might we addreſs to ſuch ſelf-deceivers thoſe ſingular lines, which, alas! do but too ſenſibly reach them!

"When the Devil was ſick, the Devil a Monk would be;
When the Devil was well, the devil a Monk was he!"

(17.) While the colleagues of Conſtantius the Roman Emperor were perſecuting the Chriſtians with fire and ſword, he politically pretended to perſecute them too; and declared to ſuch officers of his houſehold and governors of provinces as were Chriſtians, that he left it to their choice, either to ſacrifice to the Gods, and by that means preſerve themſelves in their employments, or to forfeit their places and his favour by continuing ſteady in their Religion. When they had all declared their option, the Emperor diſcovered his real ſentiments; reproached in the moſt bitter terms thoſe who had renounced their Religion; highly extolled the virtue and conſtancy of ſuch as had deſpiſed the wealth and vanities of the world; and diſmiſſed the former with ignominy, ſaying, "That thoſe who had betrayed their GOD, would not ſcruple to

betray their Prince;" while he retained the latter, truſted them with the guard of his perſon, and the whole management of publick affairs, as perſons on whoſe fidelity he could firmly rely, and in whom he might put an entire confidence.

(18.) Notwithſtanding our modern ſcepticks and infidels are great pretenders to Reaſon and Philoſophy, and are willing to have it thought that none who are really poſſeſſed of thoſe talents can eaſily aſſent to the truth of Chriſtianity; yet we ſee it falls out, very unfortunately for them and their cauſe, that thoſe perſons, who are confeſs'd to have been the moſt perfect Reaſoners of their time, are alſo known to have been firm Believers. Were it neceſſary to be more particular on this head, we might mention other examples of the greateſt and beſt Philoſophers of every age, who have always been the moſt devout men. Far from being puffed up with the pride of human learning, or aſhamed of the Goſpel of Chriſt, they have made it their glory, and acknowledged it to contain the

only infallible rules of their conduct in this life, and the only foundation of their hope in that which is to come. It is ſaid of the great Sir Iſaac Newton, that tho' he entered further into the depths of philoſophy than ever mortal did before him, yet he accounted the Scriptures of God to be the moſt ſublime philoſophy; and never mentioned his Creator's Name without an awful pauſe of adoration, wonder and ſelf-abaſement!

(19.) It was the daily practice of that eminent phyſician, Dr. Boerhaave, throughout his whole life, as ſoon as he aroſe in the morning (which was generally very early) to retire for an hour to private prayer, and meditation on ſome part of the Scriptures. He often told his friends, when they aſked him how it was poſſible for him to go through ſo much fatigue, "That it was this which gave him ſpirit and vigour in the buſineſs of the day." This therefore he recommended as the beſt rule he could give; "For nothing," he ſaid, "could tend more to the health of the body, than the tranquillity of the

mind; and that he knew nothing which could ſupport himſelf or his fellow-creatures, amidſt the various diſtreſſes of life, but a well grounded confidence in the Supreme Being, upon the principles of Chriſtianity." This remark of the Doctor's is undeniably juſt. A benevolent manner of acting, and a true greatneſs of ſoul, can never flow from any other ſource than a conſciouſneſs of the Divine favour and aſſiſtance.

(20.) The Emperor Charles V. declared, "That he found more ſatisfaction, more content in his Monaſtick ſolitude, and exerciſes of devotion, than all the victories, and all the triumphs of his paſt life had ever afforded him, though they made him eſteemed as the moſt fortunate of Princes."

(21.) Biſhop Burnet, in his Sermon on the funeral of the honourable Mr. Boyle, ſays of that excellent man; "He had the profoundeſt veneration for the great God of Heaven and Earth that I ever obſerved in any man. The very Name of God was never mentioned

by him without a pauſe and viſible ſtop in his diſcourſe." And elſewhere he obſerves, "It appears from thoſe who converſed with him on his inquiries into nature, that his main deſign in that (on which, as he had his own eye moſt conſtantly, ſo he took care to put others often in mind of it) was to raiſe in himſelf and others, higher ideas of the greatneſs and glory, of the wiſdom and goodneſs of God. This was ſo deep in his thoughts, that he concludes the article of his Will, which relates to the Royal Society, in theſe words.—"Wiſhing them an happy ſucceſs in their laudable attempts to diſcover the true nature of the works of God; and praying that they and all other ſearchers into phyſical truths may cordially refer their attainments to the glory of the great Author of nature, and the comfort of mankind."

(22.) Wicked men act very differently from this right honourable, this Chriſtian Philoſopher; they bury their ſouls in their bodies, and all their projects and deſigns are bounded within the compaſs of this earth.

they tread on. Hence it was the opinion of the Academick philoſophers, that the Souls of wicked men after their death, could not for a long ſeaſon depart from the graves and charnels, where their mates, the Bodies, lay buried; but there wandered up and down in a deſolate manner, as not being able to leave thoſe bodies, to which they were ſo much wedded in this tranſient life.

(23.) Mr. Locke, in a letter written the year before his death to one who aſked him "What is the ſhorteſt and ſureſt way for a young gentleman to attain to the true knowledge of the Chriſtian Religion?"—gives this memorable reply, "Let him ſtudy the Holy Scriptures; eſpecially the New Teſtament; therein are contained the words of eternal life. It has God for its author; ſalvation for its end; and truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter."—A direction, which he copied from his own practice in the latter part of his life, and after his retirement from buſineſs: when, for fourteen or fifteen years, he applied himſelf eſpecially to the

ſtudy of the inſpired writings, and employed the laſt years of his life hardly in any thing elſe. He was never weary of admiring the great views of that ſacred Book, and the juſt relation of all its parts; every day making diſcoveries in it, which gave him freſh cauſe of admiration. Of this his Reaſonableneſs of Chriſtianity, and "Commentaries on St. Paul's Epiſtles," are ſufficient evidence. The death of this great man was agreeable to his life. We are aſſured by one who was with him when he died, and who had lived in the ſame family for ſeven years before, "That the day before his death, he particularly exhorted all about him to read the Holy Scriptures, and deſired to be remembered by them at evening prayers. On being told that if he choſe it the whole family ſhould come and pray by him in his chamber, he anſwered, he ſhould be very glad to have it ſo, if it would not give too much trouble; and, an occaſion offering to ſpeak of the goodneſs of God, he eſpecially exalted the care which God ſhewed to man, in juſtifying him by Faith in Jeſus Chriſt; and concluded with returning God thanks, in particular, for hav-

ing bleſſed him with the knowledge of that divine Saviour." About two months before his death, he drew up a letter to a certain gentleman, and left this direction upon it, "To be delivered to him after my deceaſe;" In which are theſe remarkable words, "I know you loved me living, and will preſerve my memory now I am dead. This life is a ſcene of vanity, that ſoon paſſes away, and affords no ſolid ſatisfaction, but in the conſciouſneſs of doing well, and in the hopes of another life. This is what I can ſay upon experience, and what you will find to be true, when you come to make up the account. Adieu!" See his Poſthumous Works, p. 21. and 328. and the Preface to my Commentary on the Bible.

(24.) Mr. Addiſon (as we learn from the late celebrated Dr. Young's Tract on Original Compoſition) after a long and manly, but fruitleſs ſtruggle with the diſtemper of which he died, diſmiſſed his phyſicians, and with them all hopes of life. He diſmiſſed not however his concern for the living; but ſent for a youth nearly related to him, and finely

accompliſhed, yet not above being the better for good impreſſions from a dying friend, He came; but life now glimmering in the ſocket, the dying friend was ſilent. After a decent and proper pauſe, the youth ſaid, "Dear Sir, you ſent for me; I believe, and I hope that you have ſome commands; I ſhall hold them moſt ſacred." May diſtant ages not only hear but feel the reply! Forcibly graſping the young gentleman's hand, he ſoftly ſaid, "See in what peace a Chriſtian can die!" He ſpoke with difficulty, and ſoon expired. Through Divine Grace, how great is man, through Divine Mercy, how ſtingleſs is death!—Who would not thus expire!

(25.) It was a ſaying of Ariſtotle's reſpecting Virtue, which we may well apply to Religion, That it is neceſſary to the young, To the aged comfortable, To the poor wealth, To the rich an ornament, To the fortunate an honour, To the wretched a ſupport. That it ennobles the ſlave, and exalts nobility itſelf.

"Such bleſſings ever wait on virtuous deeds,
And though a late, a ſure reward ſucceeds."

(26.) Louis the late Duke of Orleans thus expreſſed the delight he found in piety and devotion: "I know by experience, that ſublunary grandeur and ſublunary pleaſure are deceitful and vain, and are always infinitely below the conceptions we form of them. But on the contrary, ſuch happineſs and ſuch complacency may be found in devotion and piety, as the ſenſual mind has no idea of."

(27.) Cardinal Wolſey, one of the greateſt miniſters of ſtate that ever was, poured forth his ſoul in theſe words, after his fall from the favour of Henry VIII. "Had I but been as diligent to ſerve my God, as I have been to pleaſe my king, he would not have forſaken me now, in my grey hairs."

(28.) We cannot perhaps cloſe this work more forcibly, than with the following ſtriking circumſtance reſpecting M. de Voltaire; a man, who after having long, and too juſtly, been conſidered as the patron of infidelity; and after having ſhewn himſelf equally the enemy of every Religious eſtabliſhment; has at length, to the aſtoniſhment of all

ſerious minds, and at the cloſe of a long life, of near eighty years, in the moſt ſolemn manner given the confeſſion of his Faith ſubjoined; and which is confirmed on the oath of ſeveral witneſſes who were preſent.—"I believe firmly, ſays he, all that the catholick, apoſtolick, and Roman Church believes and confeſſes. I believe in one God, in three perſons, Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt, really diſtinguiſhed; having the ſame nature, the ſame divinity, and the ſame power. That the ſecond perſon was made man, called Jeſus Chriſt; who died for the ſalvation of all men; who has eſtabliſhed the Holy Church, to which it belongs to judge of the true ſenſe of the Holy Scriptures. I condemn likewiſe all the hereſies the ſaid Church has condemned and rejected; likewiſe all perverted miſinterpretations which may be put on them. This true and Catholick Faith, out of which none can be ſaved, I profeſs and acknowledge to be the only true one; and I ſwear, promiſe, and engage myſelf to die in this Belief by the Grace of God. I believe and acknowledge alſo, with a per-

fect Faith, all, and every one of the articles of the Apoſtles' Creed." [which he recited in Latin very diſtinctly] "I declare, moreover, that I have made this confeſſion before the reverend Father Capuchin, previous to his confeſſing me." If a Veteran in the cauſe of Infidelity thus cloſes his life and his works: does it not greatly behove thoſe who have been deluded or miſled by his writings, ſeriouſly to look to themſelves; and bring home this ſtriking example to their hearts, leſt they fall into the condemnation which their maſter ſeeks thus meanly, at the end, to avoid?—See the genuine letters between him and the Archbiſhop of Anneci, lately publiſhed, p. 45, &c.

FINIS.